

THE DAY THE KING
MET HIS MISTRESS

Two pages of exclusive
Royal pictures

NEWS, PAGES 16-17

STEFFATHERS ARE
NOT BOGEYMEN

How to create an extended
family - without tears

FEATURES, PAGE 19

OSCAR YEAR FOR
THE BRITS?

No, say the stars. It's all
a total waste of time

THE EYE, PAGE 7

هكذا من الأصل

THE INDEPENDENT

Friday 13 February 1998 45p No 3,533 *

Cancer risk for children who eat too much

By Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

FAT CHILDREN are more likely to develop cancer in adult life. The risk increases with every extra chocolate bar, or its calorie equivalent, eaten each day.

The finding, based on a unique study of the nation's health and diet which started in the Thirties, offers a possible explanation for the increase in cancer which now affects one in three of the population: that we are getting bigger. Cases of cancer have risen 30 per cent among women and 21 per cent among men between 1979 and 1991 and this is only partly explained by the ageing of the population.

Latest figures published yesterday show that cancer has overtaken heart disease to become Britain's biggest killer. Nearly 9,000 more people died from cancer than from heart disease in 1996, according to the Cancer Research Campaign.

Success in combating heart disease, deaths from which have fallen sharply, has highlighted slower progress in tackling cancer, chiefly because of the difficulty of persuading people not to smoke - especially the young and women.

In another development yesterday, lung-cancer sufferers seeking compensation from tobacco manufacturers scored a significant advance when the High Court lifted gagging orders on the plaintiffs and ruled that they would not be liable for huge legal costs if they lost.

Smoking is the chief cause of cancer and outweighs all other causes. But the study of children's diets, published in the *British Medical Journal*, shows that the quantity of calories eaten affects the risk of developing cancers other than those related to smoking.

Almost 4,000 children whose

diets were closely monitored in the late Thirties were followed up for 60 years. One in 20 had died of cancer and the risk was highest among those who ate most as children. For each extra megajoule - 239 calories - eaten daily, the risk rose 20 per cent for non-smoking-related cancers, allowing for other factors such as income and social class. A megajoule is about a tenth of the average adult daily diet, equivalent to a chocolate bar, a ham sandwich or a piece of cake.

The finding reinforces the message that overeating in childhood carries long-term risks. But researchers from the University of Bristol, who carried out the study, warned that it should not be taken to mean food was bad for health.

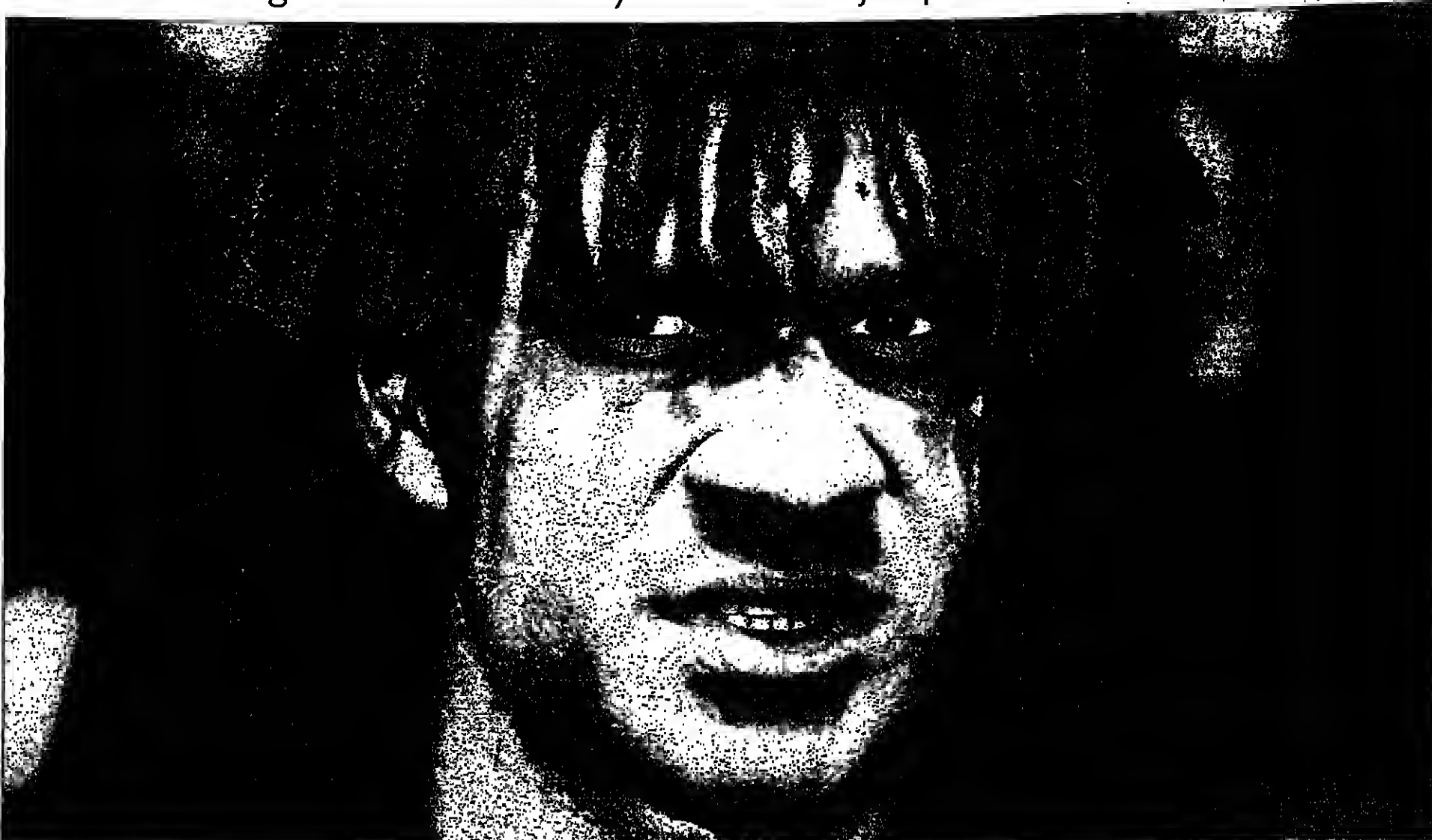
Stephen Frankel, professor of public health medicine, who led the research team, said: "At any age the individual risk of getting one of these non-smoking related cancers is small. This research shows there is a relation between energy intake and the risk of cancer and that is important in understanding the causes of cancer."

Tall people are already known to be at greater risk from cancer and average heights - and girths - have been increasing over the past 50 years with improving diet. Obesity has doubled since 1980. Research on animals has shown that restricting calorie intake slows the biological changes associated with cancer and ageing.

Cancer is triggered by a genetic mutation which causes the cells to multiply out of control and children who eat less may be at lower risk because they grow more slowly. Professor Frankel said: "If there is more of you there is more chance of one of these unwelcome mutations occurring. The simple fact that the cells are growing more slowly reduces the chance of genetic changes."

But, he said: "Within each income band, the more you eat the greater the likelihood of cancer. That holds as long as you are eating enough. No one is recommending starvation."

Ruud awakening for Chelsea's sex symbol: did he jump or was he pushed?



Ruud Gullit: joined the London club in 1996 and is said to be 'astounded' by yesterday's decision to replace him

Photograph: Chris Grievs

Vialli ousts Gullit in battle of Stamford Bridge

By Glenn Moore

THE MOST famous dreadlocks in England were yesterday given the chop and replaced by a shaven Italian pate after Chelsea Football Club claimed to have run out of patience with Ruud Gullit.

The glamorous Dutchman, who has restored Chelsea's reputation as football's most fashionable team, was relieved of his duties as player-manager after negotiations to extend his contract beyond this summer apparently foundered over pay and conditions.

Gullit, however, denied the club's version of events - which suggested he abruptly walked out

when told of the move - and claimed he not only found out about the decision from the media but had always intended to resign.

Gianluca Vialli, the Italian striker, has been appointed player-manager with immediate effect. Gullit, 35, will continue to be paid until July but will take no further part in the club's season which is reaching a crucial stage.

The decision stunned the football world. Gullit, who had never managed before, has been a great success at a club whose self-image has never been matched by its achievements. Last May, he steered Chelsea to victory in the FA Cup final, their first major honour since 1971, and at

present they are second in the Premiership, have reached the quarter-finals of European Cup-Winners' Cup, and play in the Coca-Cola Cup semi-finals on Wednesday.

Chelsea said the timing of the move was forced upon them by the need to avoid managerial uncertainty affecting next season's plans. The club said it had been negotiating for three months but Gullit's pay demands were way in excess of what it was prepared to pay. Gullit, who has called a press conference for this morning, said there had only been one, amicable, meeting and he was "astounded" by the decision.

The choice of successor will not have helped.

Though Gullit signed Vialli in July 1996, their relationship deteriorated with Vialli frequently omitted from the team. Yesterday Vialli said his first task was to improve morale and restore "honesty" in communications.

Gullit arrived in England in the summer of 1995, signed by Glenn Hoddle, then manager of Chelsea, now the England coach.

He was revered as one of the best players the game has ever seen and his arrival epitomised the English game's recovery from the dark days of hooliganism to its current fashionable status. He was appointed manager when Hoddle left to take over the England job. **Sport, page 30**

Pinter and Hume lead assault on plans for war in the Gulf

By Colin Brown
Political Correspondent

HAROLD PINTER last night delivered a stinging attack on Tony Blair and Bill Clinton over the threatened war against Saddam Hussein, claiming the US President had "killed thousands of children" by sanctions and accusing the Cabinet of being excited by the prospect of dropping "big bombs" on Iraq.

The playwright led mounting opposition to war in the Gulf at a meeting of dissident Labour MPs at Westminster, as Cardinal Basil Hume, the leader of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, released a letter to Mr Blair expressing "strong doubts" over whether military targets could be hit without causing "disproportionate harm".

Mr Pinter, a long-term critic of American aggression, told *The Independent* that the close Anglo-American relationship forged between Mr Blair and Mr Clinton was "shameful and pathetic". He said: "The USA is a monster. It's actually the USA that needs to be stopped."

"Everyone knows that war is appalling but what we lose sight of is that it's been abstracted now and sanitised to such a degree... I said in my speech that Mr Clinton has killed children and he hasn't even noticed it, because they are actually abstractions - they are children dying by his sanctions."

War had been "sanitised by political propaganda from government with a certain kind of complicity in the media. That was certainly the case in the Gulf war," Mr Pinter added: "I

am not a pacifist. I am rational." Addressing an anti-war meeting at Westminster, Mr Pinter said: "Despite continual references to the solidarity of 'the international community', the United States has in fact held international law in contempt for so long it has succeeded in rendering the concept meaningless."

"Madeleine Albright [the US Secretary of State] said the other day 'our patience is running out'. I remember a man who used to say very much the same thing in the 1930s. The USA is now a bovine monster out of control."

"That this government can so glibly ally itself to such a pointless, utterly irresponsible and profoundly dangerous enterprise is lamentable."

Iraq crisis, pages 12, 13

Friday the 13th - but worse is to come

By William Hartston

TODAY is Friday the 13th. For the superstitious, that is bad news, but there is worse to come: for the 13th of March and the 13th of November will also fall on a Friday. Three Friday the 13ths in one year is the most that can occur. It last happened in 1987; it will not happen again until 2009.

In Christian tradition, the Friday the 13th superstition is usually linked to the number present at the Last Supper, and the day of the Crucifixion, yet triskaidekaphobia - fear of the number 13 - dates back to pre-Christian times. In fact the Christian association between Friday the 13th and bad luck dates back only to the middle ages when the number 13 was already long established as a bad

omen in other cultures. The origins of 13-fear dates back to the Babylonians.

According to the 1894 edition of *Brewer's Phrase and Fable*, "The Turks so disliked the number that the word is almost expunged from their vocabulary". The French, at the end of the 19th century, would jump from 12 to 14 in street numbers. Even today, as the new Citibank building goes up on Canary Wharf, the numbers painted on the outside of the concrete pillars that will form the lift shaft read 11... 12... 12+1... 14.

From a rational perspective, such superstition is nonsense - though it must have been irritating for any nationalist to note that in the first year of the National Lottery, the numbers least favoured by the draw were 13 and 39.

Today's news

Boxing and PMT

BRITISH boxing officials believe that women are unfit to box because they suffer from pre-menstrual tension which makes them emotional, unstable and accident-prone, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday. **Page 4**

Smaller classes

MORE than 100,000 infants will be taught in smaller classes from September as the first step towards fulfilling the Government's pledge to cut class sizes. **Page 6**

Costly pleasures

THE brother of the Sultan of Brunei, the world's richest man, spent £21m on an exclusive home to keep his prostitutes out of the public eye, a court heard. **Page 3**

INSIDE GUIDE, WEATHER, P2 • CROSSWORDS, P30 AND EYE P26 • TODAY'S TELEVISION, EYE P28 • SPORT, P27-30 • GAZETTE, P18 • LETTERS, P20 • FULL CONTENTS, P2

e%perts

CALL NOW FOR YOUR PEP PACK

0845 600 0845

CALLS CHARGED AT LOCAL RATE

Quote ref. IND F136

HALIFAX

Get a little extra help.

Halifax Financial Services Marketing Group which offers life insurance, pensions and unit trusts. Halifax Unit Trust Management Limited is a subsidiary of Halifax plc. Tax free means no UK taxes are paid on investment growth or income. Tax rules will change next year. The value of your investment in a PEP can go down as well as up. To ensure we provide consistent customer service, calls may be recorded.

Scorn poured on claims of Diana death plot

By Ian Barrett

Mohamed al Fayed remained at odds with Princess Diana's representatives yesterday after claiming that the crash in which she and her son, Dodi, died was the result of a conspiracy. In an unprecedented statement, her office attacked speculation about the Princess's death and said it was upsetting her sons, princes William and Harry.

Crash investigators in Paris also refused to be drawn on Mr Fayed's claims, saying they would wait until the inquiry was over. "Mr Fayed has his own opinions but we are not prepared to comment on them. The investigation is already before a French

judge and only when he concludes his investigations will we have an opinion," said one of the investigating team.

The conspiracy theorists' view that the death of the Princess was no accident remained, at first, confined to sections of the Arab media with a vested interest in pointing the finger at Western security services. Most people accepted the official line that the fatal crash in Paris last August had been an accident.

Yet as the official French investigation into the circumstances of the tragedy drags slowly on behind closed doors, so the rumour mill has gathered pace.

Rumours insinuating that the deaths of Princess Diana, Dodi Fayed and their driver, Henri Paul, were the result of an elaborate plot, began almost immediately after the tragedy. But the conspiracy theory really took hold three weeks later as it emerged that a white car, believed to be a Fiat Uno, had been involved in the accident but had mysteriously disappeared. Furthermore, the existence of the white car had at first been denied by the French.

Then on 22 September, the American magazine *Time* published an article stating that a doctor claimed to have been informed by a colleague, who treated the princess at the crash scene, that she had told him she was "six weeks pregnant".

The story struck a chord with those who remembered that while holidaying in St

Tropez earlier in the summer, Diana, had said to journalists: "You will have a big surprise coming soon, the next thing I do." This followed photographs of her in a swimming costume displaying a slightly swollen stomach.

It was also recalled that Diana had reportedly told friends that she believed her days were numbered because the British establishment regarded her as a "loose cannon". She had apparently expressed the fear that one day she would fly off in a helicopter which would suddenly explode.

Commentators pointed out that Diana's anti-landmine campaign had been causing great annoyance to the US government and in the defence industry worldwide.

Her relationship with the Muslim son of Mr Fayed, someone who did perhaps more than any other individual to undermine the reputation of the former Conservative government, could be seen as the ultimate insult to some sections of the establishment.

In a new book, *Death of a Princess: An Investigation* by Thomas Sancton and Scott MacLeod, the authors speculate that Diana's alleged pregnancy was the most "explosive element" in the whole affair.

They write: "For the mother of the future King of England to bear the child of an Arab and a Muslim, a child who would be the half-sibling of the heir to the throne, would be embarrassing and prob-

lematic in the eyes of the Royal Family and the ruling Establishment. If a pregnancy were confirmed, the conspiracy theories would be untenable. There could theoretically be consequences for Britain's relations with the Arab world and resentment among the 1.5 million Muslim population in Britain." Extracts from the book have been published in a national newspaper, reactivating the rumour machine.

Then yesterday, Mr Fayed brought the speculation to new heights by claiming the couple were forced off the road to their deaths. "I believe 99.9 per cent it was no accident," he said. "I will not rest until I have established exactly what happened."

£400,000 for Diana's song, page 15

The wedding of the future: old, new, borrowed – or just blue?



And the bride wore knickers: Preparations for the first fashion parade of the National Wedding Show which opened at Olympia, London, yesterday

Photograph: Rui Xavier

Kate Adie hits out at management style of the BBC

By Rob Brown
Media Editor

As she prepares to go to the Gulf, the BBC's chief news correspondent, Kate Adie, has launched a scathing attack on her bosses for being better versed in American-style management-speak than in the practicalities of broadcasting.

In an interview with the trade journal *Press Gazette* to mark 30 years in broadcasting, she said a "huge division" had developed between the people who run the corporation and those who make programmes.

"There is undoubtedly now a management [at the BBC] ... which actually wouldn't know how to broadcast if it was put up against a wall and you said you were going to shoot them," she said. "It's a fashion... At the moment we are into a rather Americanised management obsession. I read memos and I am rather ashamed by some of the management-speak that knocks around this building."

This is the second time in a week that BBC mandarins have been subjected to such criticism by a senior employee. The head of drama serials, Michael Wear, said he was quitting the cor-

poration in disgust at both its commercialization and its "suh LA-style" approach to management.

But Ms Adie told *The Independent* yesterday that she did not intend to quit. "I'm perfectly happy. If I weren't I would be out of the place," she said in response to suggestions that she is increasingly frustrated by her less frequent screen appearances. She acknowledges that it is tougher to get on the *Six* or *Nine O'Clock News* with foreign stories because of the growing number of correspondents which the BBC employs to cover domestic events, but even global news service CNN could not lure her away with a much bigger salary.

"I don't personally find myself impeded in my work in any way," she said. "But I do observe what's going on in this organisation and I do worry about young people coming into it. I was brought into an organisation where public service was absolutely paramount. But this is a corporation where the business ethic is becoming increasingly important. In journalism you need people above you with the highest standards and principles."

Brother of world's richest man 'couldn't stop spending'

By Kate Watson-Smyth

The brother of the world's richest man spent £21m on a home in Park Lane so that he could "keep his prostitutes away from the public eye", the High Court heard yesterday.

Prince Jefri of Brunei would also fly up to 50 prostitutes from all over the world to his palace in Brunei for his "nightly entertainment and sex parties".

"His main interests in life involve massive self-indulgence and spending unimaginable sums of money," Christopher Carr QC claimed.

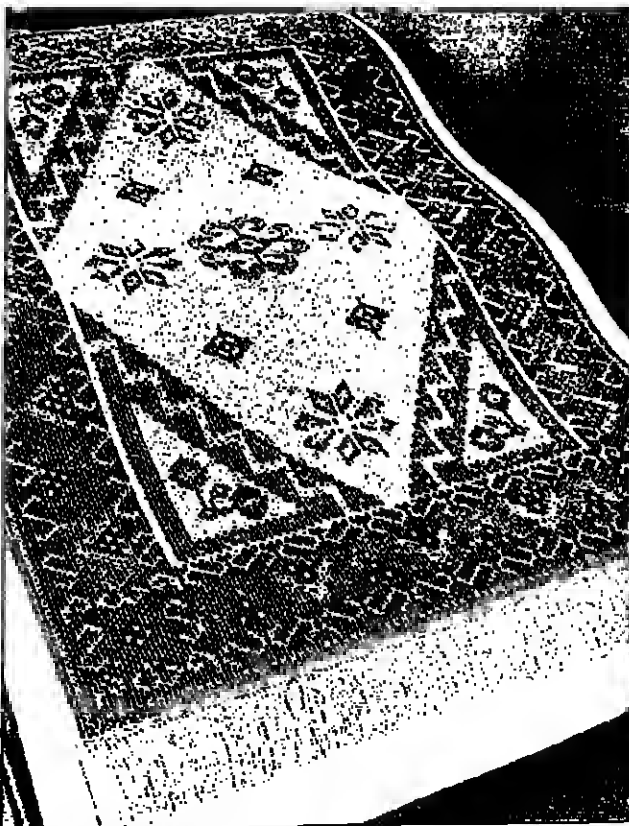
He said the Prince spent millions of pounds on expensive objects d'art including a \$7-8m rug woven from solid gold thread and encrusted with precious stones as well as a collection of erotic watches and pens and a £895,000 blackjack table made of jewels and semi-precious stones with a gold shoebox for the cards.

The Prince's extravagant lifestyle was outlined on the fourth day of a multi-million pound legal battle which could become one of the most expensive personal actions in British legal history.

Prince Jefri, 44, who has four wives and three children, is being sued for £80m by Bob and Rafi Manoukian, two of his closest friends and emissaries, who claim he failed to honour two business deals.

The Prince, who recently bought Asprey's, the Queen's jewellers, for £244m, is counter-suing for £100m claiming that Rafi Manoukian exploited a friendship and made unreasonable and concealed profits out of him.

However, Mr Carr, for the Manoukians, suggested that his counter-action was motivated by spite. "Prince Jefri is so affronted and offended at being sued by the Manoukians that he has instructed that their lives should be made a misery by suing them for everything that moves and engaging them in ex-



All that glitters is gold: the rug woven from solid gold thread and the blackjack table inset with jewels that the prince is said to have bought

Photograph: PA



implication is that Rafi Manoukian should not have been making a profit but the Prince gave little attention to Rafi's profit. Prince Jefri simply wanted what Prince Jefri wanted at a price he was willing to pay."

The court, packed with 10 barristers and up to 14 solicitors, heard that Prince Jefri bought the property at 45 Park Lane, the former Playboy Club, for £21m even though he had been told two months earlier that it was only worth £5m.

"A substantial proportion of his extensive palatial construction in Brunei was carried out for the purpose of providing his nightly entertainment. His sex parties attended by up to 50 prostitutes from various countries flown to Brunei, paid, housed, clothed and jewelled at his expense."

The court was shown photographs of some of the items which Rafi Manoukian procured for the Prince.

"Rafi came to hear that Prince Jefri used to have gambling sessions at 45 Park Lane for some of his friends. It was in secret because it would be frowned upon in Islamic circles," he said.

Rafi Manoukian designed and commissioned the blackjack table and Prince Jefri was delighted and agreed to pay the price asked without negotiation.

"He now claims that he did not even know that this table had been delivered – it had never been taken out of its packing until recently. That is a lie. Its purpose is to protect Prince Jefri's appearance of religious devotion from any improper taint within a society of increasingly fundamentalist attitudes."

The Prince also paid around £5m for 10 watches which depict a mechanically coqueting couple on the hour and £800,000 on a set of pens fashioned to resemble a naked couple.

The case continues.

Green Flag Motoring Assistance

WE LEAVE EVERYONE STANDING BUT YOU

THIS MONTH OUR
MOTORING ASSISTANCE
COMES WITH A LITTLE
EXTRA HELP

Join today and claim your
free £5 Marks & Spencer
gift voucher

How's this for speed? On average, Green Flag reach you in just 35 minutes! In fact we're so confident of our service that if we don't reach you within the hour, you can claim £10 back.

How's this for cost? Cover starts from only £29.50* per annum, and if you join today we'll give you a free M&S gift voucher worth £5.

That's faster and cheaper than the AA and RAC. They can't beat us. So join us.

POST TODAY - NO STAMP NEEDED

GREEN FLAG, Freepost, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS99 4GF Please send me further information about GREEN FLAG.

UN802

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)

Address

Post Code

Home Tel

<http://www.greenflag.co.uk>

*Offer applies to customers joining at full list price before 29.2.98. Excludes those customers who have previously been offered a discount. Prices quoted are for continuous payment methods only. Cars registered before 31/3/97 are subject to a 10% discount. Prices and conditions correct at time of going to press.

CALL FREE TODAY ON
0800 0001 353

quote ref. no. UN802 and your credit/debit card number or complete the coupon.

The 12-ft poster that really is good enough to eat

By Glenda Cooper
Consumer Affairs Correspondent

The poster looked good enough to eat – and it was when the world's first edible poster was unveiled in London yesterday.

The 12ft-long chocolate-covered bar from Cadbury's was almost 30 times its original size, weighed 100kg and required three men to carry it.

The gigantic bar was made from 40kg of chocolate and 22 gallons of milk – the equivalent of milking a cow for 10 days. It marked the relaunch of the Snack Wafer brand in the UK and a comeback of the 30-year-old advertising slogan "Bridge That Gap With Cadbury's Snack".

The poster site on Vauxhall Bridge was patrolled overnight by security guards. Tony Bilsborough, spokesman for Cadbury's, said: "Although the weather isn't hot enough to melt it, we're taking it down later. We don't want to tempt people into gorging on this massive spectacle."

The edible campaign was to be replaced by a 3D imitation later in the day. A further 650 poster sites across Britain are being erected today at a cost of £2m.



Chocs away: Melanie Sykes, of television's Big Breakfast, launching Cadbury's Snack Wafer with an edible poster in London yesterday

Shopping this weekend? Don't forget the list.

- 1 special edition (pref. 3 doors)
- Bags of style
- Decals and cloth trim
- TASTIEST!
- 1.1 litre fuel efficient engine.
- 5 speed transmission
- Get a nice colour:
 - Cherry Red? Shannon Green? Indigo Blue? Bianca White?
- Engine immobiliser
- Twin speaker radio/cassette (not tinny)
- Silver inserts to bumpers & protective side mouldings
- Tinted glass (ice cool)
- Rear fog lamp
- LATEST finance deals?!!
- 3rd brake light
- HEADLAMPs MUST be HALOGEN
- DON'T FORGET!
- Ask them to throw in delivery, number plates and 12 months' Road Fund Licence!!!



THE SPECIAL EDITION
106 LOOK
FOR JUST £6,995*



PEUGEOT

THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE

FOR FURTHER DETAILS ABOUT THE 106 LOOK SPECIAL EDITIONS INCLUDING 2 YEARS' FREE INSURANCE*, RING 0345 106 106* www.peugeot.co.uk

* FINANCE OFFER: EXAMPLE: 106 LOOK 1.1 LITRE PETROL, 3 DOOR, FINANCE PRICE** £7,290.00, DEPOSIT £1,000, CUSTOMER APR 18.9%, 36 MONTHLY PAYMENTS** £200.00, FINAL PAYMENT £4,290.00, TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE £8,290.00. BASED ON AN ANNUAL MILEAGE OF 6000 MILES. ** FINANCE PRICE INCLUDES DELIVERY TO DEALERSHIP, NUMBER PLATES, 12 MONTHS' ROAD FUND LICENCE, 2 YEARS' AA COVER AND 1 YEAR MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTY PLUS 1 YEAR PEUGEOT EXTENDED WARRANTY. OFFER SUBJECT TO STATUS (OVER 18s ONLY). A GUARANTEE MAY BE REQUIRED. WRITTEN QUOTATIONS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM PSA FINANCE PLC, VERNON HOUSE, GOSLAIN AVENUE, LONDON W14 2QD. *A £35.00 CREDIT FACILITY FEE AND A £5.00 SALES AGENCY FEE ARE TAKEN WITH YOUR FIRST MONTHLY PAYMENT. POWER SUBJECT TO SATISFYING TERMS, CONDITIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE FINANCER FOR DRIVERS AGED 18-75 YEARS AND APPLIES TO MODELS BADGED 106 LOOK*, 106 LOOK 2, 106, 106L AND 106LX. INDEPENDENCE WHEN FINANCED THROUGH PEUGEOT FINANCE: 106 LOOK 1.1 LITRE PETROL, 3 DOOR PRICE IS ON THE ROAD AND INCLUDES 12 MONTHS' ROAD FUND LICENCE, 11 FUEL CONSUMPTION MPG (LITTER/100KM) FIGURES BASED ON 106 LOOK 1.1 LITRE PETROL, MODEL, 125 URBAN CYCLE CONSUMPTION 33.7 (4.9), EU60 OUT-OF-TOWN DRIVING CONSUMPTION 52.3 (8.4), MIXED USE + EU60 42.3 (6.7). CALLS CHARGED AT LOCAL RATE. ALL PRICES AND INFORMATION CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. VEHICLES SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY WHILE STOCKS LAST.

Women 'are unfit boxers due to PMT'

BRITISH boxing officials believe women are unfit to box because they suffer from premenstrual tension which makes them emotional, unstable and accident-prone, an industrial tribunal was told yesterday.

It heard that the British Board of Boxing Control refused to grant a top woman boxer a professional licence to compete in the United Kingdom after the board ruled women were "too fragile to box".

Jane Couch, 29, the world welterweight champion, who is forced to fight abroad, has accused the BBBC of sexual discrimination at a hearing in Croydon, south London.

Dinah Rose, representing Ms Couch – nicknamed the Fleetwood Assassin – said: "This is one of the crudest forms of gender stereotyping. It is an attempt to protect the last bastion of male-only sport against the participation of women."

Reading from a letter from the BBBC, Ms Rose said: "They state 'unfortunately many women suffer from PMT when they are more prone to accidents, they are more emotional and more labile [unstable], which makes them more prone to injury'."

The tribunal heard that the BBBC board turned down Ms Couch's application on medical grounds in June 1997. It claimed women should not be allowed to box professionally because they bruise more easily, can suffer weight gain during periods and become unstable when experiencing PMT. The board ruled that all contraceptive and painkillers taken for period pains would not be allowed.

Further, it said it would be dangerous for women to box when pregnant and they can suffer from lumps on the breasts after being punched.

The board also complained that the rule banning boxers from wearing anything above waist height would have to be "drastically reconsidered". It rejected an application by Ms Couch, from Fleetwood, Lancashire, who is 5ft 7ins and weighs 10 stone, on medical grounds despite no medical ex-



Jane Couch: Forced to fight outside of Britain

amination being carried out. At yesterday's hearing Leonard Read, the board's president and chairman, admitted that it had not medically examined Ms Couch. In December 1997, Ms Couch was offered £10,000 for a fight to be held at Wembley Arena. But Mr Read said that women boxing "only attracted alleged fans who want to see women fighting each other much as they did women mud wrestling". The hearing continues.

'Mardi Gra' bomb attack

A MOTORIST had a lucky escape yesterday after a bomb, believed to be the handiwork of the self-styled Mardi Gra extortionist, exploded in his car.

The man picked up a plastic bag, which is believed to have contained the explosive device, from a cash point machine near Sainsbury's in Forest Hill, south London and drove off with it. He suffered from shock after it went off, but police have been unable to confirm whether it was the latest attack by the Mardi Gra bomber because the device was thrown onto the road and has not been recovered by police.

Scotland Yard, however, believe it bears all the marks of the man who has targeted Barclays Bank and Sainsbury's with a series of homemade bombs that use shotgun cartridges – the latest attack coming just a week ago. Police are appealing for anyone who saw someone place a bag by the cashpoint.

— Jason Bennetto, Crime Correspondent

Choking London

EXHAUST fumes from traffic in the capital are causing pollution levels to breach almost all the Government's targets, according to a study unveiled yesterday from the London Research Centre. Last year saw levels of nitrogen dioxide exceed National Air Quality Strategy Objectives at all London measuring sites except Greenwich and Sutton. Nearly half the pollutant is spewed from vehicles and experts say exposure increases the risk of bronchitis and pneumonia. Concentrations of particulates, tiny deadly particles of dust, topped safety levels throughout the city.

— Randeep Ramesh, Transport Correspondent

Beef case set to go ahead

A SCOTTISH hotelier who served beef on the bone could be the first to be prosecuted under safety regulations. The Procurator Fiscal in Selkirk is to proceed with the test case against Jim Sutherland, of The Lodge, Carfraemill. The case is to be heard in March and carries a maximum fine of £5,000.

Mr Sutherland organised the "First Prohibition Dinner" in December; diners were to have paid £12 for slices of beef on the bone and trimmings. But the arrival of health inspectors forced a change of plan: it was decided to offer the meal free in a bid to sidestep any legal problems and Mr Sutherland, who is also a farmer, footed the £2,000 bill.

Police move paedophile

CONVICTED paedophile Robert Oliver has been moved from the Sussex police station where he has been sheltering to more permanent secure accommodation elsewhere in the country. Oliver, 43, who was jailed for 15 years for the sexual assault and manslaughter of 14-year-old Jason Swift was released last September.

He then stayed in Swindon, Wiltshire, London, Dublin, Liverpool and Manchester before arriving in Brighton, where police warned he posed a "significant threat to the safety of young men and boys."

Crash firm fined £9,000

A COACH company was fined £9,000 yesterday for having faulty brakes on a coach that crashed, killing nine American tourists and the British driver. The brakes and speed-limiter were defective, which led to the coach colliding with a van and then careering off the M2 in Kent in November 1993. Sittingbourne magistrates were told, Brclanton, formerly the Travellers Coach Company, was not represented in court, but had pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to having a defective speed-limiter.

The story tobacco firms don't want to hear



Violet Rumsey: 'I feel that my family and I have suffered enough' Photograph: Brian Harris

British smokers who have contracted lung cancer yesterday cleared another crucial legal hurdle in their battle to win compensation from cigarette manufacturers.

Lawyers representing the smokers were given reassurance in the High Court that if they lose their case they will not be liable for huge legal costs. The decision - the first major one before the courts on conditional fee agreements - endorsed the no-win, no-fee agreement.

Furthermore, the gagging order which prevented the plaintiffs from talking publicly about their cases was lifted, adding to what the solicitor Martyn Day, of Leigh, Day and Co, described as "a good day as far as justice for the ordinary British individual is concerned".

Smokers' claim for compensation set to go ahead as threat of huge legal costs is lifted. Clare Garner reports

Mr Day said the ruling had "cleared the clouds" which the defendants, Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco, had put over the case in terms of the plaintiffs having to pay the costs.

"As a result I'm pleased to say that the whole of the legal team is happy with the idea that we continue to act for this group of plaintiffs and pursue the case with full vigour to trial as soon as possible."

Gallaher and Imperial Tobacco had argued that because the solicitors - Leigh Day and Co and Irwin Mitchell - and the barristers are using a Conditional Fee Agreement, they are intimately involved and there-

fore liable for costs. But Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Aldous and Lord Justice Chadwick said that although the lawyers were acting under a no-win, no-fee agreement, they did not need any special protection. They were not given a debarment order exempting them from future legal costs estimated at up to £9m.

John Pickering, one of the solicitors at Irwin Mitchell, welcomed the judges' confirmation that their team would be in exactly the same position as advisers on Legal Aid.

He said: "We have no greater or lesser risk as to legal costs. Hence the spectre of us

being pursued by the tobacco companies has been lifted from us."

Legal experts said yesterday that, had the the lawyers lost outright on the liability issue, it would have almost certainly have halted litigation against tobacco companies in the foreseeable future. It would also have had a damaging effect on the Government's plans to expand "no-win, no-fee" agreements.

At present, 43 smokers have issued writs, but more are expected to follow suit. The youngest plaintiff, a 49-year-old mother, died in December.

A spokesman for the anti-

smoking pressure group Ash called on other living victims of lung cancer from cigarette smoking who wish to join the action to contact Ash.

One of the plaintiffs, 76-year-old Ernest Jones, from Croydon, south London, was in the High Court for the ruling. He had started smoking when he was 13, in 1934; his father had told him that smoking would help him to grow. For 52 years he smoked between 20 and 40 a day.

He stopped six months before he was diagnosed with lung cancer in November 1986; doctors gave him just 12 months to live. He is now clear of cancer but has endured 35 operations, including having half a lung removed. "I'm trying to keep afloat - that's all I can say," he said.

It's addictive you see. You can't give it up

Violet Rumsey's story is one that the tobacco manufacturers tried to keep under wraps, writes Clare Garner. But yesterday, following the lifting of the gagging order, she seized her first opportunity to describe the addiction which is killing her.

Nothing could make Mrs Rumsey give up smoking, not even having half a lung removed. When at the age of 55 she was diagnosed with lung cancer, she vowed she would

never smoke again. What she had not realised was that she was suffering from an addiction that even a close brush with death could not cure.

"I stopped in hospital - it would be difficult not to - but when you come out you just automatically go for one. I'm afraid," said Mrs Rumsey, a 68-year-old mother of two. "It's addictive, you see. You can't give up. It's terribly hard." She eventually kicked the 20 to 30-a-day habit two years ago, with the

help of her husband, Derek, 67, and nicotine patches.

The onset of lung cancer aged Mrs Rumsey overnight. Before the operation she was a spry 55-year-old looking after two teenage daughters and working part-time in the family factory. Afterwards, she had lost all her energy; she had aged "all at once".

Now, after 13 years of living under the shadow of lung cancer, suffering side-effects from radiotherapy and a further

three operations, Mrs Rumsey is seeking compensation from the tobacco industry. "I feel that my family and I have suffered enough," she said. "Seeing as they [the tobacco manufacturers] encouraged the smoking in the first place, knowing it was addictive, I feel that they owe it to me."

Mrs Rumsey had her first cigarette at 14 as a way of being "sociable". Her main aim in bringing her case to court is to make other people, particular-

ly youngsters, more aware of the consequences. "It may stop them doing it," she said hopefully.

Mr Rumsey had every sympathy with his wife's inability to give up smoking after the operation. "It's all very well to say someone should give up because they are ill, but they are in a state in which it is even more difficult to give up." He feels passionately that people should not be put in her position in the first place.

Why do **other PCs**



cost more

than Tiny

HOME BUSINESS SYSTEM

- Intel Pentium® II Processor 233MHz
- 32MB SD RAM
- 5.2GB UDMA IDE Hard Disk Drive
- 14" SVGA Colour Monitor
- 4MB 3C Graphics Card
- 32 speed Max CD ROM Drive
- 56kbs Voice Fax/Modem
- Waveable 32 Integrated Sound
- 150 Watt PMPO Speakers
- Over 2290 of Software
- Windows 95

At Tiny we build in the latest technology in our factory. And sell our PCs direct in our showrooms.

Passing on the savings to you. Spec for spec, you won't find better value.

51 SHOWROOMS NATIONWIDE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL FREEPHONE

0800 783 9813

£999

£646

OTHER SYSTEMS START FROM

£646

THE BIGGEST PC MANUFACTURER IN THE HIGH STREET

TINY COMPUTERS LIMITED, REDHILL BUSINESS PARK, BOWENHURST ROAD, SALFORDS, REDHILL, SURREY RH1 5YU.

FAX 01293 822 514. www.tinycomputers.co.uk

As prices and specifications change, we reserve the right to change without notice. Please check availability before ordering. Quotes are offered for sale only. All prices are inclusive of VAT and delivery. Prices are subject to change without notice. Prices are subject to change without notice. Prices are subject to change without notice.

PRICE CHECK
PRICE - WE CAN'T BE BEATEN

Dixons

SALE

FINAL WEEKEND

MUST END MONDAY!

CORDLESS PHONES

saisho 471
TELEPHONE
• 10 two touch number memory.
• Mute button.
• Last number redial.
Was £23.99.
£14.99
GREAT VALUE

saisho 211
TELEPHONE
• Last number redial.
• Ring or off switch.
Was £7.99.
£7.99
HALF PRICE

ADDLINE TEL 1
• Last number redial.
• Mute button.
• 10 number memory.
Was £23.99.
£14.99
HALF PRICE

MATSUI 230
SPEAKER TELEPHONE
• 10 number memory.
• Hands-free speakerphone.
Was £19.99.
£17.99
LOWEST EVER PRICE

MULTI-FUNCTION PHONE
BT RESPONSE 2000
BUSINESS PHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
• Hands-free speakerphone.
• 75 number memory.
• LCD featuring easy access to call services.
Was £199.99.
£99.99
NEW

BT RESPONSE 6
ANSWERING MACHINE
Remote access - so you can collect your messages wherever you are.
Was £29.99.
£24.99
LOWEST EVER PRICE

BT RESPONSE 8
ANSWERING MACHINE
• Remote access.
• Message counter.
• Call screening.
Was £24.99.
£17.99
SAVE £5

MATSUI 9000
TELEPHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
10 number memory.
Was £34.99.
£29.99
SAVE £5

FAX MACHINES
Panasonic UF51
TELEPHONE/FAX/DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
• Automatic phone/fax switch.
• Integrated digital answering machine.
• 15 number memory.
Was £239.99.
£219.99
SAVE £10

SAGEM COMPACT
FAX MACHINE
• Automatic phone/fax switch.
• Compact function.
Was £229.99.
£119.99
SAVE £10

SHARP LX70
FAX MACHINE
• Automatic phone/fax switch.
• 5 sheet document feeder.
Was £179.99.
£159.99
SAVE £20

DIGITAL CORDLESS PHONES

SOUTHWESTERN BELL 895
CORDLESS PHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
• Hands-free speakerphone.
• Intercom facility between base and handset.
Was £129.99.
£89.99
SAVE £40

BT FREESTYLE 80
CORDLESS PHONE
• Paging facility between base and handset.
• 10 number memory.
• Up to 100 metre range.
• Out of range warning.
Was £59.99.
£58.99
SAVE £10

BT FREESTYLE 100
CORDLESS PHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
• LCD display.
• 10 number memory.
• 40 hours standby time.
Was £129.99.
£79.99
SAVE £10

BT FREESTYLE 100
CORDLESS PHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
• LCD display.
• Add up to 5 additional handsets.
Was £249.99.
£119.99
SAVE £10

HAGENUK HOMEHANDY
DIGITAL CORDLESS PHONE
• Digitally Enhanced Cordless Technology for excellent call quality.
• Up to 300 metre range.
• GAP compatible - handsets are interchangeable with other GAP compatible base stations regardless of the manufacturer.
Was £129.99.
£119.99
SAVE £10

BT DIVERSE 1015
DIGITAL CORDLESS PHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
• Up to 360 minutes talktime/for standby time.
• Paging facility between base and handset.
• GAP compatible - handsets are interchangeable with other GAP compatible base stations regardless of the manufacturer.
Was £249.99.
£229.99
SAVE £20

PRICE CHECK
PRICE - WE CAN'T BE BEATEN

Every week we check the prices of the products in the national press to make sure that our prices are the lowest. If you find a lower price elsewhere, please let us know immediately and we will be pleased to match the difference. Just notify us within 7 days of purchase. The product must be new, complete and available for immediate delivery. Mail order prices excluded.

3 WAYS TO BUY

- 350 STORES NATIONWIDE
- ON-LINE SHOP: www.dixons.co.uk
- ORDER HOTLINE: **0800 68 28 68**

Part of DSG Retail Ltd

Dixons

There's a Great Deal going on

Where a Best saving is claimed the product has been offered for sale by Dixons at the higher (best) price for at least 10 consecutive days prior to the reduction.

Minister delays full switch to digital television

By Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

THE GOVERNMENT has kicked in to touch the thorny issue of when to turn off the frequencies that currently beam television channels into people's homes. It is now expected to make existing television sets obsolete around 2013 rather than 2003 as had been forecast.

The analogue frequencies which carry television broadcasts are to be replaced by digital signals. Later this year, the existing terrestrial channels and a new consortium of Granada and Carlton will begin broadcasting on the new digital frequencies. To encourage take-up of set-top boxes, and in future television sets,

which can receive digital signals, the Government plans to set a date for the cut off of analogue broadcasting.

The previous Government had pledged to look at cutting off analogue five years after digital transmissions begin. But yesterday, Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, said that five years was not a practical option.

Instead, the Government plans a public consultation period and to follow a National Economic Research Associates (Nera) recommendation to study take-up of digital television for two years before announcing a cut-off date.

"[Nera] believe the existing analogue frequencies can be closed down in 10-15 years time," said Mr Smith. "We are ruling out

THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

● New technology allows television channels to be broadcast in a digital form that will take up less "bandwidth" or space in the radio spectrum. This could allow 200 channels to be broadcast over existing frequencies.
● To receive the digital signals, viewers will need a set-top decoder for their existing television. In a couple of years, televisions will be available with internal decoders.
● As well as broadcasting existing channels digitally, broadcasters plan a range of new

channels, like the BBC's free 24-hour news channel. Other channels will be paid for by subscription, like those planned by British Digital Broadcasting.

● To encourage take-up, broadcasters are likely to subsidise the cost of set-top boxes. The first boxes may cost less than £200.

● After two years of digital broadcasts, the Government will set a date when it will stop broadcasts on existing frequencies. Forecasts predict that this will be around 2011-2013.

the five-year option, it is not a practical option. We are not announcing a cut-off date now because it is not sensible to do so before DTT [digital terrestrial television] has

even started or we have any idea what take-up is likely to be."

The Government wants to move to digital partly so it can sell off the analogue fre-

quencies currently used by television to mobile phone companies and other private operators.

The television industry wants an early cut-off date to encourage take-up of digital sets and services. Manufacturers could produce more digital televisions at a lower cost to the consumer, which in turn would encourage people to buy them faster.

Yet the Government wants to avoid the politically unpopular course of forcing people to change their sets or lose their favourite TV programmes. In all, the cost to consumers of buying digital sets could reach £1bn to £2bn according to the Nera report. "It is the consumer who is king and our policy must be developed with the consumer in mind," said Mr Smith. "No one

is going to be forced into paying for adapting to digital TV when they cannot afford to do so... we will not wish to switch off analogue until digital receivers are universally installed in households as analogue receivers are now."

The Government plans to look at how a subsidy using the money from selling analogue frequencies might be used to help the last remaining people convert to digital sets.

British Digital Broadcasting, the company which plans to sell subscription digital television, put a brave face on the Government's announcement: "Today's announcement sends a clear signal: the future of television is digital," said BDB chairman and chairman of Carlton television Michael Green.

What next for Tina, the queen of New York?

By Paul McCann

Just as China-watchers study speeches in the *People's Daily* for clues about the Chinese ruling elite, so has the New York and London media scene pored over recent pronouncements from the world's most-gossiped about editor.

Tina Brown, editor of the *New Yorker*, and with former *Sunday Times* editor Harry Evans part of media's most glamorous couple, has dropped her usual reticence to drop hints that she may, and may not, be on the move.

In January she gave a very valedictory interview to the *People's Daily*-equivalent of the New York ruling class - the advertising-free Public Broadcasting Service.

On her fifth anniversary at *New Yorker* she listed her achievements - in raising the magazine's circulation and updating its pool of writing talent - in a tone that stayed largely in the past tense. It offered little for the future but a sense of a job completed. "I think all we want to do now is just keep on with this quality and keep on raising the bar," she said.

Then this week's *New Yorker* finds her writing - something she does extremely rarely - like a besotted teenager about Tony Blair and Bill Clinton after attending their soirée at the White House last week. Mr Clinton she describes thus: "His height, his sleekness, his newly-

TINA ON BILL

Tina Brown on Bill Clinton: "Absurdly debonair... His height, his sleekness, his newly-cropped, iron-filing hair, and the intensity of his blue eyes project a kind of avid inclusiveness."

TINA ON TONY

"His slight figure and youthful purposefulness give him an air of a clever, unsullied young cousin of Clinton's, visiting from across the water."

TINA ON CHERIE

Tina Brown on Cherie Blair: "The ardent look that Cherie Blair shoots him [Tony] still has the undergraduate complicity of 'Darling, we made it, didn't we?'"

cropped iron-filing hair, and the intensity of his blue eyes project a kind of avid inclusiveness that eclipses every jaded celebrity he passes."

Tony Blair has an "elfin glow" and Cherie shoots him "The ardent look [that] still has the undergraduate complicity of 'Darling, we made it, didn't we?'"

Brown-watchers attribute



Love-in: Tina Brown and her husband Harold Evans with Tony and Cherie Blair

this increased profile to the decision of the *New Yorker*'s millionaire owner, Si Newhouse Jr. to bring the weekly, and its finances, under the direct control of his magazine company Condé Nast.

One scenario has Brown returning to Britain to edit the all-

ing Blairite *Observer* - which could explain the journalistic onanism about the Blairs in her *New Yorker* article. And she was recently seen with the *Observer*'s editor-in-chief Alan Rusbridger at the fashionable La Caprice restaurant in London. Previous rumours had her be-

coming British ambassador to Washington.

One close friend thinks the *Observer* option doubtful: "She is probably on at least \$1m a year at the *New Yorker*. Si Newhouse is believed to contribute to her and Harry's rather lovely Sutton Place apartment. I find

it hard to believe she would give that up for Farringdon Road [home of the *Observer*]."

And yet the rumours persist. "Some say rather wickedly that the stories originate from Tina herself, just to keep up the lustre," says the friend. "But I would never believe that."

Priest found guilty of sex assault on girl aged 13

By Andrew Buncombe

A senior Roman Catholic priest was last night facing jail after being convicted of indecently assaulting a teenage girl after baptising her into his church.

Father John Lloyd, 57, a spokesman for the Archbishop of Cardiff, was convicted of assaulting the girl more than 20 years ago. The jury convicted him of one indecent offence after considering verdicts for nearly 10 hours. They had previously cleared him of four charges of rape and six of indecent assault. They were unable to reach a verdict on a further nine charges of indecent assault.

All the charges, which have shocked the south Wales community in which he worked for three decades, related to allegations dating back more than 20 years. One woman, whose allegation sparked police inquiries, said Lloyd had raped her in the confessional at her school 27 years ago when she was aged just nine.

Cardiff Crown Court was told that Lloyd assaulted a 13-year-old schoolgirl shortly after baptising her. He had driven the girl back to his house where he assaulted her before taking her back to her grandmother. The victim, now aged 37 and one of six adults who said they were assaulted as children, said yesterday: "I would like to say I am pleased at the verdict in relation to my traumatic experience."

Lloyd, a parish priest in

south Wales for 32 years and a former primary school governor looked pale and drawn as the guilty verdict was read out.

Judge Mr Justice Rougier remanded him in custody to await sentence next week but warned a jail term was "virtually inevitable" given his position. The maximum possible sentence is two years.

Lloyd had denied four charges of rape and 17 offences of indecent assault covering an 18-year period from 1970.

The Catholic church said Lloyd would not longer be allowed to practise as a priest.

The Archbishop of Cardiff, the Most Rev John Aloysius Ward, said in a statement: "I am deeply saddened and ashamed by the events which have culminated today in the conviction of Father John Lloyd. My sympathy and that of the priests and people of the archdiocese goes out to all those who have suffered through his actions and to their families."

Since the trial began, police have received nine further complaints of indecency against Lloyd. Senior investigating officers are believed to be looking into the claims and could question Lloyd further in prison.

Mgr Kieran Conry, director of the Catholic Media Office, said last night: "The conviction of Fr Lloyd shows once more the problem of child abuse is present across our society from the church to the family."

7%* INSTANT ACCESS

Proof you don't need a big ad to create a lot of interest.

For more details on the Instant Access Savings Account that offers a consistently high rate of interest, please ring free on 0800 804 804.

BANK OF SCOTLAND
BANKING DIRECT
0500 804 804

Visit the Great New HOLIDAY SHOW

HOLIDAY & TRAVEL 98
SHOW

The Best Holiday and Travel Event for 1998
February 13th-15th 1998
National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham

It'll feel like the first day of your holiday!

With everything from lazy beach holidays to exciting adventure vacations, both at home and abroad, there are plenty of great holiday ideas for you at HOLIDAY & TRAVEL 98. Come and browse through a huge selection of major tour operators, travel agents, tourist information offices from many different countries, cruise lines, airlines and adventure travel specialists at the show.

There are informative features offering useful travel advice, famous television personalities appearances, and you can try a taste of "The Food of the Nations" while you decide on your holiday destination for 1998.

Come and enjoy making your holiday plans with us, at

SAVE
£2 on the full price of £6
when you bring this coupon to the show.
Valid for reduced entry for 1 adult OAP or telephone the ticket hotline

HOLIDAY & TRAVEL 98
PHONE THE ADVANCE TICKET HOTLINE NOW ON 0121 767 4774 and save £2 on the price of a £6 Adult/OAP ticket or bring the coupon to the show.

SPECIAL TRAVEL OFFER with **KLM**
Take advantage of KLM's special travel offer to visit Holiday and Travel 98. If you live within the West Midlands, you can travel to the NEC by train and/or bus for just £2 with our inclusive ticket offer. There is FREE parking at most local stations in the West Midlands, and fast and frequent trains serve Birmingham International station to the NEC.

Ask about the ticket offer when you book your ticket for the event on the ticket hotline or 0121 767 4774.

Special Travel is only applicable to tickets booked in advance.

For details about local bus and train services, phone the Birmingham Hotline on 0121 298 2700.

Children under 16 FREE. Car parking FREE.

Organised by Inside Communications Ltd. For general information telephone 0121 298 2700.

travel

DEBBY HAMS

Holiday Fashion Show

text

Travel Theatre

Artisans

Childrens Choice

with Free Parking and Special Facilities

Travel Agents

Travel Agents

THE INDEPENDENT

WIN a Hotpoint® dishwasher
Make washing up a thing of the past

Do not miss this chance to win a Hotpoint® D62 Aquarius dishwasher.

The D62 has the capacity to take 12 place settings and features five different programmes, including a delicate wash and economy wash. It boasts a 9 hour time delay, adjustable built-in water softener, low water and energy consumption.

Upper baskets are adjustable to allow large items to be placed in the bottom basket. The lower basket is also fixed with a fold-down plate rack.

The control panel is available in a choice of six colour options: Natural Linen, Mercury, Soft Blue, Ice Blue, Pastel Green and Classic Polar White.

We have one Aquarius dishwasher to win so enter this competition and the following number, answer the question you will hear on line and leave your

name and full address stating which colour you prefer. Please washing up a thing of the past in your home today!



Call 0930 525272

For more information call the Hotpoint Information Line: 0541 506070
www.hotpoint.co.uk

Calls cost 50p per minute at all times. Winner picked at random after time close 15 February 1998. Usual Newspaper Publishing rules apply. Editor's decision is final.

HEARTS JOINED,
PROPOSALS MADE AND
VOWS RENEWED.
THIS SATURDAY AT
HARRODS.



If two things were destined to be together this Valentine's day, it's you and Harrods. Choose from seven floors of gifts ranging from the traditional, such as fine Belgian chocolates and floral bouquets, to the more extravagant, like a Chopard Love Ring from our Fine Jewellery Room. Or you could choose to treat your Valentine to a romantic meal. Heart-shaped salmon parcels with oysters in the Sea Grill perhaps, or a special Valentine's banquet at the Georgian Restaurant. So this Saturday say those three special little words your loved one has been dying to hear. Let's visit Harrods.

Harrods

Harrods Ltd., Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7XL. Tel: 0171-730 1234.

Family tax credit can go in mothers' purses

By Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The Government will launch a national advertising campaign to boost the take-up of its planned working families tax credit when it replaces family credit next year.

The new tax credit will also include a childcare credit on a much more generous scale than the childcare element of the current benefit for families on low earnings.

The move will coincide with the introduction of the national minimum wage and the reform of national insurance in a

package of measures, to be announced in next month's Budget, designed to make work pay for those on low earnings.

The package will be on the same scale as the Government's New Deal, for which it raised more than £5bn from the windfall tax on privatised utilities, although the Government also expects the measures to reduce the bill for income support.

Dawn Primarolo, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, made it clear yesterday that the Government had backed away from a radical early version of the new tax credit. This is believed to follow the advice of Martin

Taylor, head of the task force on tax and benefit reform, whose report will be published around the same time as the Budget.

Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in a speech to the Women's Budget Group: "There is no threat to independent taxation from the working families tax credit. Nor would there be a compulsory transfer of resources from women to men." Couples could elect who would receive the credit, she said.

The new working families tax credit is designed to make it plain that work pays. Unlike the existing credit it will not be a benefit payment. It will be administered by the Inland Revenue rather than the benefits agency.

it in their husbands' pay packets instead.

Ms Primarolo said, in a speech to the Women's Budget Group: "There is no threat to independent taxation from the working families tax credit. Nor would there be a compulsory transfer of resources from women to men." Couples could elect who would receive the credit, she said.

The new working families tax credit is designed to make it plain that work pays. Unlike the existing credit it will not be a benefit payment. It will be administered by the Inland Revenue rather than the benefits agency.

However, Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has moved to meet objections from campaigners who argued that the tax credit could transfer money from women to men within households, to the detriment of the children. The man is the main earner in three-fifths of the couples who claim family credit, but it is paid almost entirely to women.

The Treasury has indicated that there will be an option for women to receive the new tax credit through their local post office, in which case it would be deducted from their husband's pay packet. In addition, al-

though couples would have to make a joint claim to the Inland Revenue, just as they jointly apply for family credit, there will be no question of abolishing independent taxation. Critics had feared that the need for an Inland Revenue assessment of the household's income would make joint taxation inevitable.

The new childcare credit will replace the "childcare disregard" in family credit. This taken up by only 31,000 women, fewer than 5 per cent of claimants of the benefit.

Chris Giles, an expert at the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies, said: "It looks

like the Government is re-hedging family credit, and paying it through the pay packet. They have ended up with something reasonably sensible."

A Treasury spokeswoman said reports that the Government planned to pay for a big increase in child benefit by clawing some of it back in tax from high-earning women was "speculative".

Most campaigners see an increase in child benefit, paid to mothers, as the best way of improving the welfare of children. The catch is that child benefit is a universal, not means-tested, benefit.



Modified foods face new curbs

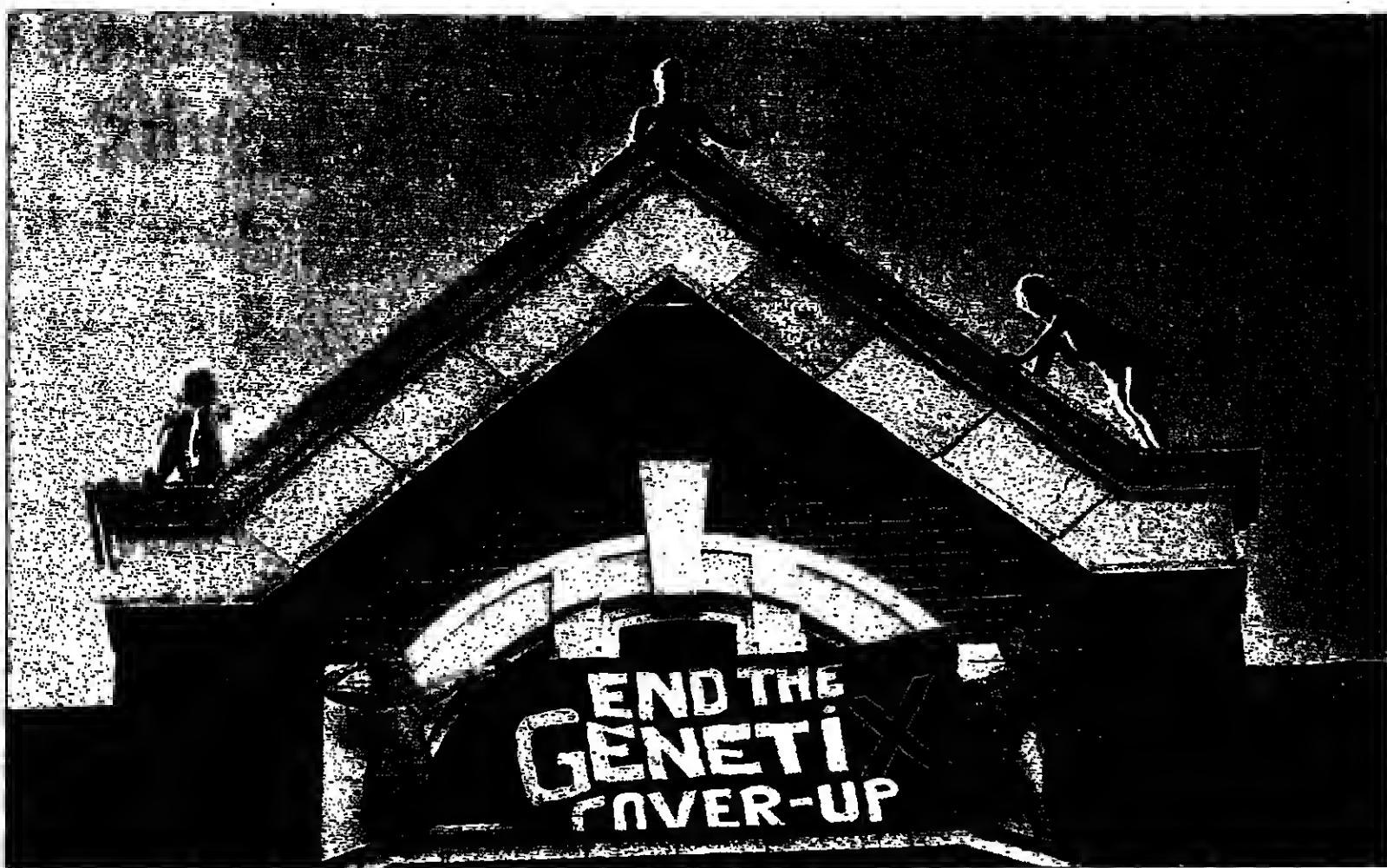
By Fran Abrams

The Government will use its presidency of the European Union to tighten procedures for approving genetically modified food, the environment minister, Michael Meacher, said.

In a Commons written answer he said he planned to press for ethical issues to be taken properly into account before modified foods such as soya and maize were approved for sale in Europe. "We have considerable concerns about the current procedures relating to the marketing and release of genetically modified organisms."

Although genetically modified soya products are on sale in Britain, a dispute is going on in Europe over approval of maize modified to resist weed killer and corn-borer pests.

The maize has been approved for sale in the EU despite opposition from the European Parliament, but Luxembourg and Austria decided to ban it. Mr Meacher said he expected the issue to be discussed at the European Environment Council in June. He wanted to see tighter controls written into the European Di-



Buffing up: Protesters on the roof of Bartle Bogle and Hegarty advertising agency protesting against its involvement with Monsanto

rective controlling marketing and release of the foods, which was being revised at the moment, he said. In a statement the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions said the process for approval should be made more transparent.

There were also suggestions there should be more analysis of the products' environmental effects, it said. Soya modified by the American firm Monsanto so that it can be sprayed with weed-killer is already approved and makes up about 15 per cent of

beans imported into Britain. They go into 60 per cent of processed foods. Now an argument is taking place over approval of maize produced by another company, Novartis. Environmentalists' main concern about the maize is that it

contains a "marker" gene used in lab tests which is resistant to antibiotics. Greenpeace says it could lead to resistance in farm animals and humans.

Dr Ian Taylor, scientific political adviser to Greenpeace, said the way European proce-

dures worked meant that applications to sell modified food could only be rejected if all the partners were against them. As one country would have had to propose the move, this was almost impossible.

What's in the food? Page 21

Charities highlight loopholes in EU's 'ethical' arms code

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

A LEAKED copy of the European Union's new "ethical" arms-dealing code thrashed out between Britain and France reveals loopholes which will allow exports to repressive regimes to continue, a group of charities claimed last night.

They said the code, which is meant to parallel Robin Cook's ethical foreign policy, would not stop arms brokers in Europe from transferring weapons from one Third World country to another. The Foreign Office put up a robust defence of the draft code, saying that it regarded it as a major step forward.

A joint statement from Oxfam, Amnesty International, Saferworld and Basic, the British American Security Information Council, said the new guidelines were not tough enough to guard against human rights abuses.

Governments export to repressive regimes providing the equipment was for the protection of their security forces, there was no parliamentary scrutiny of the procedures and there was nothing to stop armshipments from being diverted to war zones, the charities said.

Although plans to secure an agreement during the British presidency of the EU were welcome, there were many shortcomings, they said. "The proposed code states that it is the duty of member states to promote transparency and mention is made of the need to harmonise export licensing procedures, but there are no measures included to ensure that these aims are realised. These

are serious omissions which threaten to undermine the efficacy of the code," they said.

A central part of the code demands that if one EU country hopes to win a contract that another has refused on ethical grounds, it must inform its partner of what it is doing. But because the code does not put a time-scale on the transfer of information a member state could unwittingly grant a licence which another had turned down, the group said.

The code says export licences should be refused if they might interfere with human rights and fundamental freedoms in the recipient country. EU countries should not allow exports which would prolong or aggravate existing armed conflicts, or which could be used other than for the legitimate defence and security needs of the recipient country. It begins, though, with a preliminary statement which says: "EU member states are committed to the maintenance of a strong defence industry which is a strategic part of their industrial base as well as their defence effort. They recognise that defence exports can contribute to international stability."

The agreement is significant because the EU has a 40 per cent share of the world's arms market. Britain has the world's second largest arms trade after the United States, and France has the next largest in Europe after Britain.

A Foreign Office spokesman said: "We think this is an important step in the right direction... We believe it is a very important step towards achieving our goal, which is a more responsible international arms trade."

"BTEC Higher Nationals work for us"



Halcrow take education and training seriously and it is critical that we employ people with the right qualifications. This enables us to provide the excellent professional services that our clients expect. Our experience shows that students with BTEC HNDs offer both the academic and practical skills which contribute to our business success.

Robin Sanders
Group Training Manager
Sir William Halcrow & Partners Ltd



Edexcel for a higher education

Phone our Customer Response Centre for more information and the Edexcel Higher Education Brochure on 0171 382 4500. Edexcel Foundation exists to promote education. BTEC Higher Nationals are offered by the Edexcel Foundation.

Candid Short accuses colleague of lying



Clare Short: Golden elephants remark a 'dreadful mistake'

By Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

THE SPECTRE of political vultures trying to pick out the eyes of Clare Short is presented by the outspoken Cabinet minister in a Valentine's Day documentary to be broadcast on BBC2 tomorrow night.

After a Cabinet exchange on the Orange Order marches in Northern Ireland last summer, an inaccurate leak appeared in a Sunday newspaper in October, in which she was reported to have told ministerial colleagues that the marches should be treated like those of "the Ku Klux Klan and Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts".

Tomorrow's fly-on-the-wall documentary captures Ms Short's incautious reaction, in which she accuses an unknown Cabinet minister of the leak. "It's just utterly malicious," she says. "It's someone from within the Cabinet because it's a lie about a discussion that did take place."

"It's very sad. It's extraordinary that people on your own side would do such things, but there you go. I have to be a little bit more careful."

In the programme, Ms Short explains the background to her controversial reference to "golden elephants" after the volcano eruption on the Caribbean island of Montserrat.

She says it was a "dreadful mistake": she had meant to reflect the impossibility of

islanders' demands for aid as "pink elephants", but she had mistakenly used the adjective, "golden".

"It was dreadful," she says. "I feel very bruised and battered by it. I mean, part of it is my fault. It isn't all my fault, but I am very damaged by it, there's no question about that, and some people have tried to use it to damage me. And I am amazed how many vultures there are out there trying to pick my eyes out."

According to Peter Gill, the reporter, officials asked for her accusation against the unnamed Cabinet colleague to be cut, but it was Ms Short herself who asked - unsuccessfully - for another remark to be deleted.

The Secretary of State for International Development was talking about her main task, "that of reducing by one half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015."

However, she then added: "Clearly, there can be no more noble task than the world could commit itself to as we approach the new millennium: much more impressive than comes at Greenwich, but I'd better not talk about that. Sorry, don't tell anyone I said that."

AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE APPEAL

Last week, the town of Rostaq was devastated by an earthquake. Within 48 hours of the alert reaching the outside world, Médecins Sans Frontières were in the area. A field hospital has been established and smaller clinics are being set up. Mobile teams have been organised to collect the wounded and hundreds of people have been treated for fractures, head wounds and trauma. It's not over though. Thousands of people from outlying areas are now converging on Rostaq seeking help and in the wake of the earthquake, the weather has turned savagely cold. Médecins Sans Frontières are doing all they can. With your help, we can do more.

Please call the credit card hotline on 0800 731 6732 or post the coupon.

I enclose a cheque/postal order (payable to Médecins Sans Frontières UK)

for: ☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ £100 ☐ Other: _____

or please debit my card, Visa/Mastercard/Charity Card/Amex/Switch

Card No:

Signature: Tick this box if you would like a receipt ☐

My/our/your/its:

Address:

Postcode: Telephone:



Médecins Sans Frontières, FREEPOST LON 7506, 124-133 Clerkenwell Road, London EC1P 1PE. English Charity Reg. No. 1026588.

هكذا من الأصل

هاتفا من الأصل

BRITISH GAS

NOW MILLIONS OF OUR CUSTOMERS COULD
SEE SAVINGS OF AROUND 18%
ON THEIR GAS BILLS. TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU
COULD SAVE CALL

British Gas
Home

Savings shown compare payment by monthly direct debit to cash/cheque paid later than 10 days on an annual consumption of 16,650 kWh. Savings vary according to gas consumption.

Offers and other information. Some offers may be 18 years or over. Subject to terms. Some offers may require an initial deposit for which an early fee will be charged. Please read the terms and conditions of the offer.

Sensation as Royal Academy returns to profit

By Louise Jury

SUCCESSFUL exhibitions and strong financial management have transformed the financial fortunes of the debt-ridden Royal Academy in London, its management said yesterday.

An 11-per-cent increase in the number of visitors to more than 1 million helped turn in an operating surplus in 1997 for the first time in four years. And that was without the crowd-pulling *Sensation* exhibition which falls within the current financial year.

Ian Blatchford, the finance director, said it was on course to be out of the red by the end of 1999, a year earlier than projected in a business plan implemented when the Royal Academy hit financial disaster two years ago.

The Academy has gone for calculated programming to secure its future with a major Monet exhibition at the beginning of 1999. Its last show of Monet works, in 1990, proved the most popular in RA history with 658,000 visitors.

The financial turnaround comes two years after auditors discovered the 229-year-old institution had debts of more than £3m following inadequate financial controls and a

£400,000 fraud by the former bursar, Trevor Clark.

The annual report yesterday showed that last year the RA cut its accumulated deficit to £1.8m, returning an unexpected operating surplus of £175,000. This compared with an operating deficit of £1.4m in 1996.

Cost-cutting and new avenues for raising sponsorship contributed to the improvement. However, David Gordon, the former ITN chief executive brought in to resolve the crisis, warned that there was a limited amount of corporate sponsorship now available.

He backed *The Independent's* campaign for tax reform to encourage individual donations to the arts. "If the tax laws were simplified the whole process would be made much easier to use," he said.

Launching the annual report, Sir Philip Dowson, the RA's president, thanked the "herculean efforts" of staff for the turnaround and said: "The last year is really a very considerable achievement."

Three exhibitions - *Giacometti*, *Bruegel* and *Living Bridges*, which was sponsored by *The Independent* - attracted more than 100,000 visitors as well as receiving critical acclaim. The *Summer Exhibition*,

where works by amateurs vie for position and sales with those by academicians, attracted nearly 150,000 visitors after years of decline.

The friends of the RA scheme, which celebrates its 21st anniversary this year, now has more than 70,000 members and is the third largest in the world. The corporate membership scheme, which includes 129 companies, is the largest in the UK.

Sir Philip said plans for the future included a £100,000 feasibility study into taking over the vacated Museum of Mankind, which is owned by the Department of Culture, and turning it into an educational centre, including lecture room.

A few of my favourite paintings, by Vincent van Gogh



Master class: A painting by Rousseau (left), and two by Ary Scheffer (centre and right) among a display of four works admired by Vincent van Gogh on display until 17 May at Hertford House, central London, to celebrate the artist's link with the Wallace Collection. Photograph: Andrew Burman

DAILY POEM

On Monsieur's Departure

By Queen Elizabeth I

I grieve and dare not show my discontent,
I love and yet am forced to seem to hate,
I do, yet dare not say I ever meant,
I seem stark mute but inwardly do prate.
I am and not, I freeze and yet am burned,
Since from myself another self I turned.

My care is like my shadow in the sun,
Follows me flying, flies when I pursue it,
Stands and lies by me, doth what I have done.
His too familiar care doth make me rue it.
No means I find to rid him from my breast,
Till by the end of things it be suppress.

Some gentler passion slide into my mind,
For I am soft and made of melting snow;
Or be more cruel, love, and so be kind.
Let me or float or sink, be high or low.
Or let me live with some more sweet content,
Or die and so forget what love ere meant.

The Daily Poems for this, pre-Valentine's Day week come from *The Book of Love*, an 800-page anthology edited by Diane Ackerman and Jeanne Mackin (W W Norton, £22.50). "Monsieur" was Elizabeth I's French suitor, the Duke of Alençon.

£10 buys a chain cutter

He's chained up through his sensitive nose and made to walk on red hot plates, whilst the back of his legs are hit in time to music. Onlookers taunt him and force him to drink beer. Why? Because they're teaching him to 'dance' for tourists who pay to watch his agonising waltz.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) rescues 'dancing bears' and takes them to sanctuaries where they can be free of pain and suffering. But we can't carry out our life-saving work without the support of people like you. Your gift of just £10, or whatever you can afford, will help cut the chains of innocent animals. So please send your donation today. He's counting on you.

Yes, I want to cut the chains!

Please fill in your details below.

Name

Address

Postcode

I enclose my donation of £

Please make cheques payable to WSPA or fill in your credit card details below.

Visa/MasterCard/Switch/Amex/Discover/Novus

Card No.

If using Switch, please use the number printed in the middle of your card.

Expiry date

Signature

Tick here if you would like a free information pack.

Please send this completed form and your donation to: WSPA, Dept AL450,

Prepost NE2604, Northampton, NN5 6BR. No stamp is needed. THANK YOU.

Pay Cheque No. 20000

WSPA

NOKIA 6110

The Nokia 6110 is the most powerful mobile phone in the world. It's the only mobile phone that can do everything you want in a mobile phone plus a few extras you might not have thought of. It's the only mobile phone that can do everything you want in a mobile phone plus a few extras you might not have thought of. It's the only mobile phone that can do everything you want in a mobile phone plus a few extras you might not have thought of.

NOKIA

CONNECTING PEOPLE

Nokia is a registered trademark of Nokia Corporation, Finland.
Copyright © 1997. Nokia Mobile Phones Ltd. All rights reserved.

www.nokia.com

Second British aircraft carrier to head for Gulf as 'Invincible' undergoes radar repair

By Ian Burrell

HIGHLY SENSITIVE radar equipment has broken down on board HMS *Invincible*, the aircraft carrier which forms the backbone of the British military force in the Gulf.

Members of the ship's company have called home to their families to report their concerns over the loss of a key part of the ship's defence system. Families were said

to be "worried" by the news. The Ministry of Defence said last night that the repair work on the radar was "going well" and that it was hoped that it would be back in operation later today. The ship is currently alongside in the harbour at Dubai while the repair work is being carried out.

An MoD spokeswoman said that the breakdown would not put the ship at risk of attack. "It's not going to hamper her war-

fighting capabilities," she said. She said that *Invincible*, which arrived in Dubai on Wednesday, was expected to return to sea later today. She said that the carrier had come into harbour to repair the radar, to carry out some routine maintenance and to give the ship's company some much-needed rest and recuperation. *Invincible* was sent to the Gulf on 17 January but has been at sea since before Christmas.

Although the British task group in the Gulf is tiny compared with the United States deployment, the Royal Navy is still anxious to impress. Yet, almost inevitably in a period of intense war training, there have been problems which have hampered preparations, particularly on *Invincible*.

At the end of last month, a Sea Harrier fighter aircraft was almost lost when a cockpit tore open at an altitude of more

than 40,000ft. The pilot, who was exposed to temperatures of -53C, managed to return the aircraft to the carrier for repairs after it fell 37,000ft in three seconds.

The *Invincible* has eight Sea Harriers and seven Royal Air Force Harriers aboard, as well as seven Sea King helicopters.

A second British carrier, HMS *Illustrious*, is expected to join or replace *Invincible*, and is currently undergoing

training in the Mediterranean. The other British ships already in the Gulf are the frigate HMS *Covey*, the destroyer HMS *Nottingham*, and the supply ships RFA *Bayleaf* and *Fort Victoria*.

The remaining British personnel in the Gulf are in Kuwait, where eight Tornado GR1 aircraft are stationed, and Bahrain, with two VC-10 tankers and a company of Royal Engineers.



Lesson of war: Iraqi schoolchildren being taken to Saddam's Martyrs Monument in Baghdad yesterday, to mark the seventh anniversary of the deaths of 54 Iraqis killed when a US bomb hit the Al-Amireyah shelter during the Gulf war. Photograph: Patrick Baz/AP

UN in last-ditch drive for peace

By Rupert Cornwell

The United Nations, and above all its Secretary General Kofi Annan, are now at the centre of efforts to secure a diplomatic solution to the Gulf crisis, and avert the US and British aerial onslaught on Iraq which could start in a matter of days.

Although a first round of talks with the five permanent members of the Security Council on Wednesday made little progress, Mr Annan plans to repeat the exercise today, and British officials professed themselves "not discouraged" with the outcome.

If the five can agree on a clear enough mandate, the Secretary General could yet travel to Baghdad - as the Iraqis themselves have long been urging. But Mr Annan says he will not go until a deal is at hand. The two sides had taken "a few

steps forward," but there was still a "long way to go".

Reaching agreement within the Security Council will be almost as tough as finding one with Baghdad.

While Britain and US are uncompromising that Saddam must fully comply with existing UN resolutions or face the prospect of military strikes, France and China are opposed to the use of force, while Russia's ferocious hostility visibly shocked William Cohen, the US Defense Secretary, when he visited Moscow yesterday.

Complicating matters is the possibility of a further UN resolution on Iraq. Britain maintains that existing UN resolutions authorise the use of force, but would none the less like to see another one now - as a "strong signal," a senior Foreign Office official put it, which would be a "final warning" to Saddam.

But its tabling is being held up by the differences on the Security Council, and any text that could be agreed might be so weak that it only advertises the disunity of the international community over an attack.

Failure to agree anything would simply underline those divisions even more sharply - which is why the US is profoundly suspicious of the whole enterprise.

In the meantime, despite offers of logistical assistance dribbling in from various European capitals, the EU's heart is plainly not in the enterprise.

In the Gulf, Foreign Office minister Derek Fatchett wound up a visit to Oman and the United Arab Emirates, claiming opinion in the Gulf was hardening against Saddam, but most

other Arab countries, as well as Iran, oppose the use of force.

British officials believe the next few days will show whether a deal is possible. "The door remains open," they say - by coincidence or otherwise, exactly the phrase employed by the Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf yesterday after a meeting with the Arab League in Cairo.

But the US military build-up continues relentlessly, with the announcement that a further 40 aircraft including F-117 Stealth fighters and B-52 heavy bombers will be going to the Gulf. Two Patriot anti-missile missile batteries - flawed stars of the 1991 war - have already been dispatched to the region.

Notwithstanding the unyielding tough talk by the US, a sense is growing that diplomacy may yet save off the worst. Taken at face value, a declared British readiness to look at "special arrangements" for the inspection of Saddam's presidential palaces does not amount to much.

Whatever these arrangements, they will have to include the right for repeat inspections, and contain no time limit on them. Richard Butler, the head of UNSCOM must also take part. And, Britain and the US insist, the Iraqi undertakings must be in writing.

But, some diplomats say, brinkmanship is starting to budge the fast-frozen diplomatic ice floes.

The UN is in the thick of things, and Baghdad's revised offer of a two month inspection period for eight "presidential palaces", though already rejected by Washington, London and Paris, may not be its last.

Cabinet gives Blair backing for attack on Saddam

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR yesterday secured Cabinet backing for war in the Gulf after dismissing Saddam Hussein's offer of a compromise over United Nations inspections of presidential palaces as "completely hopeless".

A Cabinet source told *The Independent* that there was no dissent within the Cabinet, and there was a feeling that war was now inevitable. "No one spoke against it. Force is the only thing that may move Saddam."

Mr Blair's official spokesman said: "The Prime Minister set out that should it go to military action, it was important that every effort was made to ensure that civilian life was not harmed. "He believed we have the technology and that any military action could be carried out in a way to avoid that and any environmental catastrophe."

But the Cabinet is braced to withstand public protests over the possible civilian casualties. "There may be so-called 'collateral' damage, which means civilians will get killed. Saddam is absolutely ruthless and he won't care if his own people are killed. He has killed his own people before," the Cabinet source said.

The Cabinet was given an outline briefing on the targets including the palaces and President Saddam's Republican Guard by the Secretary of State for Defence, George Robertson.

To prepare public opinion for the war, Downing Street emphasised that the palaces President Saddam refuses to open to proper scrutiny by UN arms inspection teams are not historic monuments, but military bases, including one as big as Paris.

Mr Blair told the Cabinet that President Saddam had offered to allow the UN teams into the palaces but only for one inspection. "That is absolutely hopeless," he said.

The Prime Minister made it clear that he would lead a concerted propaganda campaign to counter the anti-war protests with details of the Iraqi stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. The spokesman said: "He said people have to realise these weapons aren't a theoretical, abstract threat. He was saying to ministers that when they are out and about talking to journalists and colleagues and making speeches and so on, that we have to be constantly explaining why this is so serious."

Mr Blair pointed out to the Cabinet that there had been occasions when inspection teams had only uncovered weapons on their fourth visit. Mr Robertson reinforced Mr Blair's message by briefing the Cabinet on United States aerial spy photographs showing that the Iraqis moved weapons material around the bases in convoys of lorries, when inspection teams arrived.

He drew the attention of the Cabinet to newspaper articles warning that the threat was not theoretical but real, and that Iraq had developed several germs and toxins for weapons, including anthrax, botulinum, and the nerve gas, Agent 15. He said everybody was working flat out to try to get a diplomatic solution and that remained the objective, but he said the Government had to get more facts on President Saddam's arsenals.

Reporting on the diplomatic efforts, in the absence of the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, who is in Panama, Mr Blair said that contrary to the impression given in the newspapers, there was greater support lining up for the strategy against Iraq than had been reported.

STAPLES

The Office Superstore

BEST EVER

IBM APTIVA

'98 OFFER

HURRY
Ends Sat 21 Feb

AWARD WINNING AMD-K6 PROCESSOR

• 100MHz with the Intel Pentium II

• 5 winning awards as voted by PC Magazine, PC, Retail Vision '97, Popular Science Magazine, Cebit '97 & Comdex '97

ALL THIS FOR ONLY

£949

INC. VAT

FREE OLIVETTI JP190 COLOUR INKJET PRINTER SKU 295105

• 200 x 300 dpi

• Windows Draw Software and Colour & Mono Ink cartridges

OPTION TO UPGRADE

LIGHTNING FAST GRAPHICS

• 64 BIT ATI RAGE II 3D Graphics & MMX Technology give lightning fast graphics & smooth performance

IBM TECHNOLOGY & SERVICE

• The IBM Aptiva '98 gives you power, extreme multimedia capability, leading edge technology with a great selection of award winning software. Backed by confidence, quality and acclaimed IBM Hardware services & support

FREE TOP GAMES

FROGGER SKU 291153

GRAND PRIX MANAGER II SKU 291161

FREE AT&T DISKETTES & KENSIKO JOYSTICK 2000 SKU 245332 260422

IBM MULTIMEDIA PC MODEL NO. APTIVA E51 SKU 292672

AMD K6 233 PROCESSOR 268 MB DRAM 24X CD ROM ATI RAGE 3D GRAPHICS 14" SVGA MONITOR

PLUS £500 OF SOFTWARE

Windows, Simply Speaking, Organizer, Strategic Games World, 123, Word Pro

£28.39 PER MONTH INTEREST FREE OPTION

Example: Cash Price £949, 10% Deposit £95, 13 Monthly payments of £28.39. Final payment £484.92. Total amount payable £579.91

OR **29%** Example: Cash Price £949, 10% Deposit £95, 30 Monthly payments of £28.39. Total amount payable £514.50

• Upgrade to a better specification printer for the difference in retail price. Applies to desktop PCs only.

• Software supplied preloaded and in jewel case CD format. (Boxes shown for illustration purposes only.)

FOR YOUR NEAREST STORE, FREE CATALOGUE OR TO PLACE AN ORDER

FREE FONE 0800 14 14 14

40 SUPERSTORES NATIONWIDE CANTERBURY OPENS MARCH

FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8AM - 8PM

SATURDAY 9AM - 6PM

SUNDAY (open 6 hours, times may vary)

Copy Centre

Printing, Colour Copying, Faxing, Laminating, Binding and all your Office Services at the Lowest Prices

Free next day delivery on orders over £20 EX VAT (£35.25 INC. VAT) Next day delivery (Orders under £20 EX VAT are subject to our delivery charge of £2.90 EX VAT, £3.41 INC. VAT)

Bellicose Russians ambush US defence chief

By Phil Reeves in Moscow

ANY illusions the US Defense Secretary, William Cohen, may have entertained about leaving Moscow without a drubbing over the Iraq crisis evaporated under the heat of the television lights yesterday during an encounter with his Russian counterpart.

After waiting stealthily for a packed photo-opportunity, the Russian defence minister, Igor Sergeyev - ex-chief of the elite strategic missile forces - pounced on his American visitor with a warning that Washington's policy could badly damage US-Russian relations.

Mr Cohen, hot-foot from a six-nation Gulf tour which included pep talks to US troops on the USS *George Washington* aircraft-carrier, arrived here denying his mission was to win over the Russians - a sentiment about as plausible as a claim by Bill Clinton that he is uninterested in women. He also said he hoped the Iraq crisis would

stuff denied it). When it ended, he asked to respond. "President Clinton has exercised great caution in not making haste ... but rather proceeding cautiously and with great prudence," he said.

"You properly raised the question of what are the possible consequences of acting militarily. It is equally appropriate to ask the question 'what if we fail to act and allow Saddam to continue to flout the UN resolutions, to continue to play hide-and-seek with the inspectors?'"

He also tried to lower the temperature, calling the US-Russian relationship one "of critical importance to our two countries" and describing Russia as "a great power". But the encounter only served to emphasise the gap that divides Washington and Moscow.

With US commanders in the Gulf saying their military machine will be ready to strike Iraq in a week, the crisis was inevitably going to overshadow Mr Cohen's trip. Sympathy for Baghdad has been running high for days in Russia, and is evident daily in the newspaper coverage.

Yesterday *L'Express* said an attack on Iraq's chemical weapons could cause disaster, endangering millions in neighbouring countries. The crisis was propelled further into centre stage by a report in yesterday's *Washington Post* that UN inspectors in Iraq last autumn found documents from 1995 referring to a Russian deal to sell an animal feed fermentation tank to Baghdad which could be used for making biological weapons. Six weeks ago the UN demanded an explanation from Moscow, the paper said, but received no reply.

Moscow's Foreign Ministry dismissed the story as a "crude invention". It claimed Russia's contribution to Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction was "practically nil", adding that most components came from western Europe - notably the Germans, Austrians and Swiss. Mr Cohen declined to confirm or deny the *Washington Post* report, saying it was an issue for the UN to investigate.

Mr Cohen's visit did help clarify another issue, though. For several years Washington and Nato's spin-doctors have justified the alliance's eastwards expansion by arguing that it is not an issue that matters to Russians. True, most of the 147 million population have more immediate worries. But with the uncoiling mood of anti-Americanism within the Russian elite, unlocked by US policy in the Gulf, the West might now have to rethink that argument.



Cohen: Given a telling-off by Russian marshal

not dominate the agenda; they wanted to discuss nuclear safety and disarmament. But the Russian, his uniform gleaming with a marshal's decorations, was not in a peaceable mood.

Although his words were less emotive than the "conflagration" and "world war" predicted by his boss, Boris Yeltsin, they were a departure from the usual diplomatic niceties. Mr Cohen's aides listened in silence as the Russian lectured him about Moscow's "deep concern over the possible prospects for Russian-US relations in the military field, especially if military action occurs."

As the two sat across a table, the Russian continued: "Is America ready for all the possible consequences? Does the uncompromising and tough stand of the United States over Iraq help to strengthen stability and security in the world?"

Mr Cohen, a stiff, softly-spoken figure, seemed to be taken aback by this blunt - and obviously stage-managed - public dressing-down (although his



A Russian ultra-nationalist, with a portrait of President Saddam Hussein, picketing the US embassy in Moscow

Photograph: Reuters

Nationwide's current account, a thousand times

BETTER

than a bank account



If you are one of the people who are regularly overdrawn - and had transferred your bank account to a Nationwide FlexAccount when it was launched back in 1987 - you could have been up to £1,000 better off by now. Assuming you were overdrawn 10 months in the year, you could have been up to £1,054 better off had you switched from Barclays; up to £643 better off had you moved from NatWest; and up to £763 better off had you transferred from Lloyds. Even if you were never overdrawn, you could still have been at least £58 better off.

Ten years on, nothing's changed - you still get better value from a Nationwide FlexAccount. Because, unlike many of the High Street banks, we don't charge you a fee for agreed overdrafts. And the interest we charge - only for the actual days you're overdrawn - is among the lowest around. Just as important, we also pay a great rate of interest when you're in credit.

You're better off in terms of convenience, too. Especially since we became the first in the UK to launch an Internet banking service - Online

Banking, the latest in a long line of Nationwide innovations.

If it all sounds too good to be true, there's a simple explanation. Because we're a building society owned by our customers, we don't have to pay any dividends to shareholders. Unlike the banks. We believe in putting our customers first instead, and using more of our profits to give you better value and better service.

What more incentive do you need? Put yourself first and open a Nationwide FlexAccount today.

Change today. Call us on 0500 30 20 17, quoting ref. FD9, drop into any Nationwide branch to pick up details and an easy to use transfer pack, or visit our web site at www.nationwide.co.uk



putting members first

It pays to decide...



The World's No.1 Building Society

You must be 16 or over to apply for a FlexAccount. The opening of a FlexAccount and the provision of certain facilities is subject to an appraisal of an applicant's financial standing. Overdrafts are only available to those aged 18 or over, subject to status. Overdrafts are repayable on demand. Written quotations available on request. The above figures compare FlexAccount with interest bearing current accounts during the period from 18 May 1987 to 31 December 1997. The better off figures are derived by deducting the assumed charges and overdraft interest (where relevant) from the assumed credit interest for each account compared over the 10½ year period. Calculations assume credit interest was paid gross without deduction of tax. Credit interest is normally paid net, after tax, if you are a taxpayer. Higher rate tax payers may have had to pay additional tax. Calculations assume a £500 opening credit balance, a £1500 credit each month, £300 expenses paid on the first day of each month and thereafter equal amounts spent throughout the month creating a £300 authorised overdraft on the last day of each month except August and September in the 10½ year period. In August and September the balance is drawn down to a £50 credit balance. For customers who never overdraw the assumption is the balance is drawn down to a £50 credit balance each month. A customer following this scenario who transferred from Barclays would be £58 better off, from Lloyds £59 and from NatWest £74. Full details of charges, credit interest rates and overdraft rates applied over the 10½ years are available on request. Information verified by Blay's MoneyMaster. Approved overdraft rates and charges at 17 December 1997 are as follows: Nationwide 12.2% EAR, nil monthly fee; Barclays 18.8% EAR, £5 monthly fee; Lloyds 18.8% EAR, £8 monthly fee; NatWest 17.8% EAR, £5 monthly fee. Interest rates and charges may vary. Nationwide is a member of the Building Societies Ombudsman Scheme and subscribes to the Banking and Mortgage Codes. Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide House, Pipers Way, Swindon SN38 1NW.

OFFICIAL
SPONSOR
OF THE
FOOTBALL
LEAGUE

URGENT APPEAL

EARTHQUAKE IN AFGHANISTAN

Last week an earthquake killed over 4000 people in the Takhar Province of Afghanistan. Today thousands more are suffering in sub-zero temperatures - without shelter, warmth, medical supplies or clean water.

Despite the terrain, weather, and on-going civil war, a Red Cross land convoy and two Red Cross flights have already arrived in the region. But additional supplies are desperately needed to prevent further loss of life.

We urgently need your help. Just £25, or as much as you can give, will help us to save lives.

Please call now with your credit card donation.

0345 315 315

Or you can send a cheque or postal order with the coupon below.

British Red Cross

Registered Charity No. 220948

I enclose a cheque/postal order (payable to British Red Cross) for

☐ £250* ☐ £50 ☐ £30 ☐ £25 Other £

Or please debit my Visa/Mastercard/Amex/Diners Club/Switch Card

No. Expiry Date

Today's date Signature

Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms

Address

Tel.

Please send this coupon with your donation to: THE BRITISH RED CROSS

AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE APPEAL, ROOM 806, FREEPOST, LONDON SW1A 7PB

*A donation of £250 or more is worth almost a third as much again through Gift Aid as we can claim back the tax.

And as we can claim back the tax.

Please tick the box if you do not want to receive further information from the Red Cross

☐ Please tick the box if you would like a receipt

Gift Aid and other information: Donations must be 10 years or over, eligibility subject to status. Some items may require an itemised bill for which an extra £20 will be charged. Please refer to our website for more information.

Starr turns up heat on Clinton

By John Carlin in Washington

Kenneth Starr turned up the heat on President Bill Clinton yesterday, waging psychological war on his alleged paramour, Monica Lewinsky, and testing the limits of legal propriety by serving a subpoena on a Secret Service agent formerly on the White House staff.

Seeking to crack Ms Lewinsky's apparent resolve not to testify that the President urged her to lie under oath about an alleged affair, Mr Starr, the independent prosecutor investigating Mr Clinton, was trying to get at the former White House intern through her mother, Marcia Lewis appeared before the grand jury yesterday for the third successive day to answer questions about her daughter's relationship with the President.

After the first day's interrogation on Tuesday she was all smiles but when she emerged on Wednesday she looked haggard. The pressure from Mr Starr's legal team had been so fierce she broke down in court and a nurse was called.

"This is a very emotionally draining and difficult time for my client," Mrs Lewis's lawyer said.

"No mother should be forced by federal prosecutors to testify against her child," Ms Lewinsky's lawyer, William Ginsburg, said Mr Starr and his staff were striving "to break my client down a piece at a time. I would describe it as abuse."

Ms Lewinsky and her mother, who shortened her name to Lewis apparently to boost an incipient book-writing career, shared an apartment at Washington's Watergate building. Prosecutors are working on the premise that Ms Lewis confided in her mother about the intimacies of her relationship with the President.

Ms Lewinsky was scheduled to appear before the grand jury yesterday but, her mother's grilling having continued longer than anticipated, she is expected to face her moment of truth next week. As may a former White House Secret Service agent subpoenaed yesterday to face questioning before the grand jury on whether he can

confirm previous reports that, contrary to the President's public denials, he and Ms Lewinsky spent time together alone in the Oval Office.

Mr Starr's decision to compel testimony from the agent caused a storm in Washington. Democratic congressmen loyal to the President voiced outrage at the depths to which they said Mr Starr had sunk, while the Treasury Department, which employs the Secret Service staff, was gearing up to fight the judicial order, arguing that the agent's participation in the legal fray would undermine trust between the President and his security detail.

Another former member of the Secret Service staff told the press on Tuesday he escorted Ms Lewinsky to a private meeting with the President in autumn 1995.

It was not clear yesterday whether he too had received a subpoena from Mr Starr.

Polls show the President's popularity remains high, while the media, widely perceived to be engaging in gutter journalism, has hit rock-bottom.



Indian women cheering as a helicopter carrying Sonia Gandhi hovered over the site of an election rally at Faridabad, in the western state of Haryana. Sonia Gandhi was campaigning for the Congress Party. Photograph: Surabhi Datta/AP

Sudan leader dies in crash

SUDAN'S First Vice-President, Lieutenant-General Al-Zubeir Mohammad Saleh, and at least two other officials were killed when their plane crashed in a river in fog in southern Sudan yesterday.

The official Sana agency said there were two survivors. A diplomat in the capital, Khartoum, said the plane apparently tried to land on a small runway in the town of Nasir, 700 km (435 miles) from the capital near the Sobat River and not far from the Ethiopian border.



Saleh: Killed as plane tried to land in heavy fog

German Euro-sceptics put political differences aside to attack Emu

By Imre Karacs in Bonn

THE BATTLE against the euro intensified yesterday as two leading figures from opposite sides of the German political divide launched a frontal assault on monetary union.

Breaking ranks with his government colleagues, Kurt Biedenkopf, one of the most powerful regional grandees, urged an "orderly postponement" of Emu beyond the millennium. On the left, Henning Voscherau, a top financial expert of the Social Democrats,

shattered a taboo by calling for a referendum.

Both men have advertised their Euro-scepticism in the past, but neither has made the point so forcefully and at such an awkward moment as now. Coming in the wake of a court case against the euro and a manifesto signed by 155 economics professors opposing Emu, the latest interventions have reignited the faltering campaign to save the Deutschmark.

Mr Biedenkopf, the Prime Minister of Saxony and defeated rival of Chancellor Helmut

Kohl, suggested in a newspaper interview that the next phase of monetary union should be postponed to 2002. According to the current schedule, this - third - stage is to begin next January with the linking of national currencies, which are to be withdrawn from circulation three years later.

"There should be an orderly extension of the second stage," Mr Biedenkopf told the *Sächsische Zeitung*. He said he agreed with the authors of the manifesto, who had argued in an open letter earlier this week

that most European governments had failed to fulfil the economic criteria of monetary convergence.

Mr Voscherau, the former mayor of Hamburg, also claims to have been swayed by scholarly argument. While he describes himself as an advocate of deeper European integration, he disagrees with the way the project is being implemented, and bemoans the lack of discussion in Germany. "This sacredness, this lack of conflict, is like a cathedral built up over the euro that greatly prohibits public debate," he said. Both the Social Democrats and Mr Kohl's Christian Democrats have signed up for the euro, and are trying to prevent the issue clouding the election campaign later this year. Mr Voscherau did attempt to exploit German resentment over monetary union at his own regional elections last September. He was punished with the worst result for the Social Democrats in the city-state since the war, and was forced out of office.

"We should launch a movement towards democratic union with a timetable and an agenda in which countries who are prepared to join would have a common currency," he said yesterday. Appearing at the launch of a book penned by the four economics professors who are suing the German government, Mr Voscherau proposed a referendum coinciding with next September's parliamentary elections.

However, the government is unlikely to bow to his wishes, for the simple reason that the outcome of a plebiscite is pre-ordained.

navigating

digital

How do you make sure the Internet is your company's path to the future instead of a quick trip to nowhere? Simple. Go with us. No one — not IBM, not Compaq, not HP — has the combination of leading edge solutions, blazingly fast Web servers, AltaVista® tools and knowledgeable Internet experts that we do. Find us at www.digital.com or call 0800 333 200. And get ready to win in a networked world.

By Richard Lloyd Parry

imposes all the pain on the workers.

By Tim Cornwell
in Los Angeles

Dear Mr. [unclear]
 I have been very
 busy lately
 and have not had
 time to write you
 but I am now
 at home and
 will write you
 again soon.
 I am very
 well and hope
 you are the same.
 I am
 very
 truly
 your
 friend
 [unclear]

An extract from one of Bernie Taupin's three pages of hand-written lyrics



Song for life: Two visitors to the Christie's auction in Los Angeles examining the lyrics, on show yesterday. There were three handwritten sheets and a final, typed version
 Photograph: Susan Sterner/AP

By Steve Crawshaw

The most important victories for the campaign – including the signing of the international treaty to ban landmines – were followed almost immediately by the most bitter splits.

		NET%† p.a.	GROSS% p.a.
SUPER SIX #	£100,000 plus	6.56	8.20
	£50,000 – £99,999	6.32	7.90
6 Months Notice	£20,000 – £49,999	6.12	7.65
	£6,000 – £19,999	5.72	7.15
MONTHLY INCOME	£100,000 plus	6.44	8.05
	£75,000 – £99,999	6.20	7.75
6 Months Notice	£35,000 – £74,999	6.04	7.55
	£15,000 – £34,999	5.80	7.25
	£6,000 – £14,999	5.48	6.85
TESSA	£500 plus		7.85
TAX FREE*			
SECOND TESSA	£3,001 plus		7.85
TAX FREE*			
TESSA CAPITAL PLAN	£9,000	6.28	7.85
OPTIONS*	£50,000 plus	5.48	6.85
	£20,000 – £49,999	5.28	6.60
3 Months Notice	£10,000 – £19,999	4.96	6.20
	£5,000 – £9,999	4.60	5.75
	£2,500 – £4,999	3.80	4.75
	£500 – £2,499	3.60	4.50
	£50,000 plus	4.48	5.60
	£20,000 – £49,999	4.28	5.35
No Notice	£10,000 – £19,999	3.96	4.95
	£5,000 – £9,999	3.64	4.55
	£2,500 – £4,999	3.36	4.20
	£500 – £2,499	3.12	3.90
3 Months Notice	£50,000 plus	5.36	6.70
Interest Paid Monthly	£20,000 – £49,999	5.08	6.35
	£10,000 – £19,999	4.76	5.95
	£5,000 – £9,999	4.48	5.60
	£500 plus	1.68	2.10

[illegible]

PRINCIPALITY BUILDING SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 89, PRINCIPALITY BUILDINGS, QUEEN STREET,
CARDIFF CF1 1UA. TELEPHONE CARDIFF (01222) 344188

AZERBAIJAN and Armenia, at odds over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, traded accusations over border shootings. The Azeris said Armenian forces fired at an army post; the Armenians denied it and accused Azeri troops of opening fire.

COMET

**COMET IS THE BIGGEST OUT-OF-TOWN ELECTRICAL RETAILER
SO THERE'S BOUND TO BE A STORE NEAR YOU**

**THE COMET PRICE
CANNOT BE BEATEN**

The Comet Price Promise guarantees that if you buy any product from us, then within 14 days find the same offer on sale locally at a lower price, we'll willingly refund the difference, **PLUS 10% OF THAT DIFFERENCE.** Ask a store for full details.

THE COMET PRICE: The stores in South Wales do not show savings in stock. All items subject to availability. *Offer excludes our car sales events. Offer ends 31/12/99.

20 APR

29.9 APR

Edward and Mrs Simpson make Fort



THE PRINCE OF WALES'S
SOUVENIR: 1934-36



Photographs from the Fort Belvedere album, taken principally by the Prince of Wales and his future wife Wallis Simpson, show (anti-clockwise from right) Wallis Simpson preparing to go out for a walk, the Prince relaxing by the swimming pool, Mrs Simpson with her then husband Ernest Simpson, and Edward and Wallis with friends in the drawing-room

The day Wallis and her husband met the prince and his mistress

IN HIS farewell broadcast to the nation, Edward VIII, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British dominions and Emperor of India, made reference to the brother who would succeed him as his abdication took effect. He called him "the Duke of York". Even before he married a citizen of the United States, the divorcee Wallis Simpson, Edward had acquired a number of American habits.

The process began soon after the First World War, when Edward set out on a foreign tour at the behest of the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, who perceived that "the appearance of the popular Prince of Wales in far corners of the Empire might do more than half a dozen solemn imperial conferences". After Canada he moved to New York, and a ticket-tape welcome. On his return to London he was full of the place and the song "A Pretty Girl is like a Melody", which he had heard at the Ziegfeld Follies, was

constantly on his lips. His endless whistling of this "damned tune" caused considerable irritation to his irascible father.

Fashionable in this, as in all things, the prince was one of the harbingers of the Americanisation of Europe. More significantly it was a sign that he was becoming his own man. It was not before long that he was 36 before he moved from St James's Palace and the immediate orbit of his censorious parents, who had recently instructed him to give up steeplechasing, as they considered it too dangerous a pastime for the heir to the throne. It was at this point that he moved to Fort Belvedere, an 18th-century house belonging to the Crown, near Sunningdale.

At the fort, as he always called it, he could live a life away from the disapproving eyes of the King and Queen. And how they would have disapproved had they known. For the fort became not just a refuge from the official world he increasingly disliked. It was also where he be-

gan to entertain a private circle of friends not drawn from court circles or the conventional aristocracy. They were an altogether more louche crowd of moneyed socialites, former army officers and toff politicians who shared his taste for the "high society" pastimes of the age.

The prince turned the fort's old-fashioned parlour into a poolside terrace for lunches adorned by young things with bobbed hair and dark glasses in pencil skirts. Having given up horse-jumping, away from parental scrutiny he took up the more perilous sport of flying. He frequently danced till dawn and had a taste for clubs; Sir Oswald Mosley, in his final interview before he died, told me of the enthusiasm with which the prince enticed him out to a seedy spot to see what Edward called a "damn fine nigger drummer".

This was the generation whose friends had perished in such large numbers in the trenches. Many who survived lost fortunes in the Great Depression. Those who could, therefore, partied with a gaiety which bordered on desperation. It is hard to say whether the prince was happy. For Fort Belvedere brought out another side to his character. Over the next six years he worked in his gardens and woods, clearing and burning acres of old rhododendrons to turn it from a wilderness into an organised landscape. He loathed laurel hedges and had a particular aversion to clipped yew and box; instead he applied Gertrude Jekyll's woodland planting the-

and became something of an authority on roses. The opening pages of the second of his private albums, from which today's selection of photographs is taken, are full of sketches and plans of the house and gardens and "before and after" pictures, and snaps of the prince working with hatchet and hoe and his sleeves rolled up. But, unlike in the earlier albums, the pictures have no captions.

These two aspects of his private life, the compulsive partying and the diligent gardener, spoke to contrasting parts of his personality. His upbringing had veered between the oppressive propriety of his parents and the surreal experience of a war in which he was never at the front

line but living constantly with its anarchic consequences. It had left him craving warmth, yet unsure of how to find it. His personality was emotional and yet seemingly incapable of deep reflection and was unreliable for his judgements. His gift for communicating easily with people of all backgrounds, honed by his work during the First World War, gave him an indefinable charisma and yet he could also be inconsiderate, selfish and even callous, as if he was rather spoilt by the universal adulation to which he was exposed.

For all the social whirl, he seemed, as his brothers married one by one, an increasingly solitary figure. "Who will Edward marry?" his parents wondered to one another. But the prince's taste was not so much for marriage as for married women rather than marriage.

During the 1920s he had a succession of mistresses, from Mrs Freda Dudley Ward to Thelma Furness, a 25-year-old beauty known to him as "Toodles". Yet even in that there were proprieties. When he was a guest at weekend house parties with her he ensured there were others to chaperone them.

In 1931 Ernest Simpson, an American ship broker who had taken British citizenship, and his wife were invited, as last-minute guests, when someone else cried off, to such a party at Burrough Court, the Leicestershire country home of Lady Furness. In later years Ernest Simpson recalled: "We all got hastily to our feet, the ladies curtseying and the men giving a slight bow as Thelma introduced us in turn. I thought the Prince of Wales looked perfectly awful. I just couldn't take my eyes off his violent check tweed suit. He looked like that music-hall comedian, Max Miller - about the same height, too". The jaundice of hindsight was

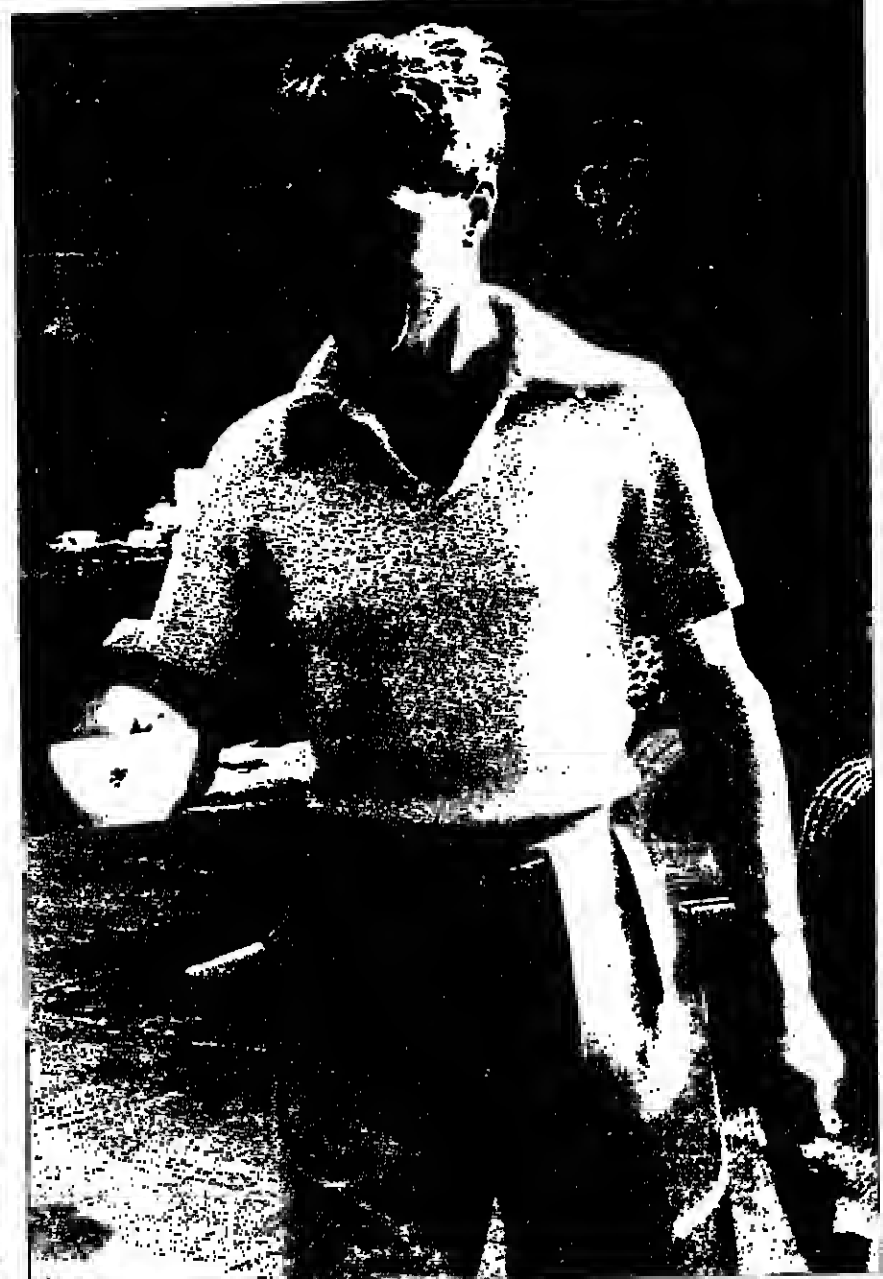
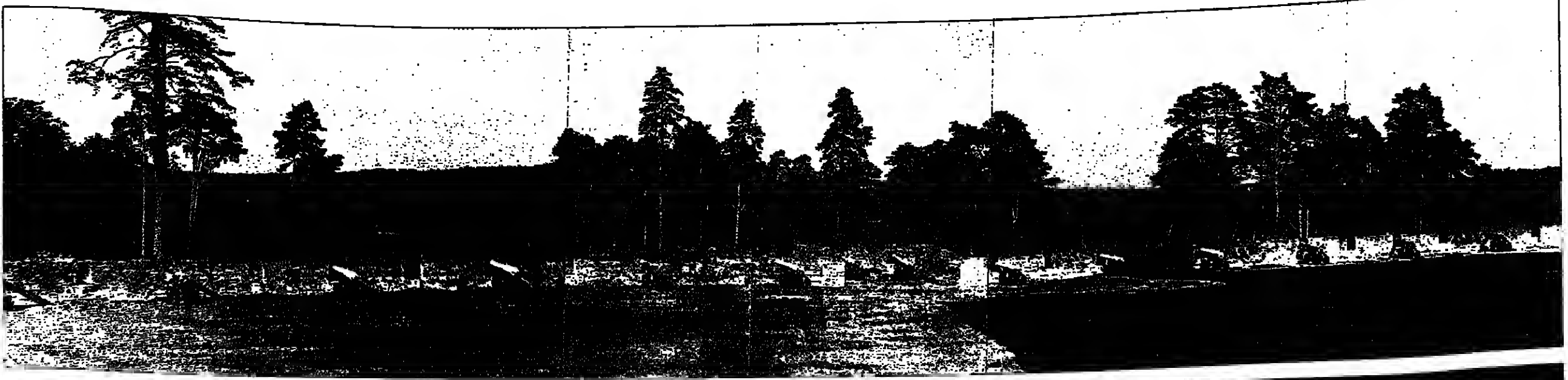
clearly speaking there. "I glanced sideways at Wallis to see what she was making of it," he added. "Her curtsey was quite a professional effort, and in no time at all she was rattling away to the prince like she'd known him all her life."

The next time they met Edward had recently returned from a tour of depressed Yorkshire villages. The prince began to talk of what he had seen but the company was uncomfortable with the subject and the conversation swiftly returned to safe topics such as balls, hunting, and golf. Mrs Simpson alone turned to the prince and questioned him further. He spoke of his worries, of his limited constitutional powers, of his wish to achieve something with his life. In response, she asked him of his responsibilities and of how he filled his days. No woman had ever talked to him like that before, the prince later said. She was the first woman to show any real interest in his job. The day was cast.

Tomorrow: The King's favourite

هكذا من الأصل

Belvedere the home of the Fast Set



Fort Belvedere (above and top) became in the 1930s the place where Edward (right and below) could create a carefree private life away from official duty

How the former king lost his beloved fort along with his crown

FORT BELVEDERE was built in the 1820s as a folly for royal tea parties: a battery of cannon was installed to be fired on royal birthdays by a resident bombardier. Diana Cooper wrote: "It was a child's idea of a fort. The sentries, one felt, must be of tin." The last "salute" was fired in 1907, and in 1910 the fort, on the south side of Windsor Great Park in Berkshire, near Ascot, became the "grace-and-favour residence" of a courtier. When it became vacant in 1929, the Prince of Wales asked to have it, and his father, King George V, granted it to him with the words: "What do you want that queer old place for? Those damn weekends I suppose!"

The Duke of Windsor wrote in his memoirs of the passion with which he rebuilt the fort and devoted himself to its hundred acres of garden. "I cleared away acres of dank laurel and replaced them with rare rhododendrons. I cut winding paths through fir and beech, revealing the true enchantment of the woodland setting ... I found a new contentment in working about the fort with my own hands ... I pressed my weekend guests into arduous physical labour."

It was in these surroundings that he created a private life away from his official duties, and it was here that his friendship with Wallis Simpson (who visited for the first time with her husband in February 1932) developed.

When the Prince of Wales came to the throne in January 1936 as King Edward VIII, the fort assumed a special role as "the king's independent home" where he could escape from the tension and restrictions of court life. During the late autumn of that year, as the constitutional

Michael Bloch on the folly the Prince of Wales made the centre of high society in the Thirties



crisis arising out of his desire to marry Wallis developed, he withdrew to it in an atmosphere of virtual siege, and it was there that he signed the Instrument of Abdication on 10 December.

Before giving up the throne and leaving the country, however, Edward obtained an informal promise from his brother and successor, George VI, that he would be allowed to live at the fort when he returned to England. This promise was broken, as became clear during the Second World War when the Duke of Windsor learnt that, without his having been consulted, Fort Belvedere was to be made available for the evacuation of government offices.

He wrote bitterly to his London solicitor that this was "only another example of my brother's failure to keep his word to me of December 1936, when ... it was clearly understood verbally (unfortunately not in writing) that the Fort would be reserved for me until such time as it was mutually considered suitable that I should take up residence in England again ..."

After the war, the Windsors, who had decided to make their main home in France, asked on several occasions whether they might be allowed to live at the fort for a few weeks a year during the spring and autumn. As the duchess wrote to a friend in 1947: "We would not be there long enough to upset the powers that be ... It is a waste of time being homeless on the face of the earth and most disturbing ..."

However, these requests were always refused by the British royal establishment. In 1955, it was announced that the fort (which had been empty since 1936) would cease to be a grace-and-favour residence and would be let on a 99-year lease.

The first commercial tenant was the Duke of Windsor's nephew Gerald Lascelles. He refurbished it in a way that left few traces of its former occupancy. However, in 1977, Lascelles' successor as tenant, a son of the Emir of Dubai, sublet the fort to a television company for the making of the drama series *Edward & Mrs Simpson*, and thus it was briefly restored to expert hands to something of its former state. Fort Belvedere's present tenant is Gaius Weston, the owner of Fortnum and Mason. Michael Bloch is the editor of *The Intimate Correspondence of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor* (1986)



Wallis Simpson, photographed by the Prince of Wales, with friends at Fort Belvedere: lunch on the terrace (above); at the swimming pool (left); and in a mystery quest on the lawn. Wallis was first invited to the fort with her husband in February 1932, and it was here that her affair with Edward developed



Monica Edwards

Monica Newton, writer:
born Belper, Derbyshire 8
November 1912; married 1933
Bill Edwards (died 1990); one
son, one daughter; died 18
January 1998.

Monica Edwards was a prolific and popular writer, fully deserving the choice of Children's Author of the Year made by Foyle's Children's Book Club in 1960 (along with Captain W.E. Johns of *Biggles* fame). Described by the magazine *Junior Bookshelf* as "wholesome books, full of practical activity and a sensible interest in outdoor life", her fiction was always more than a cut above the facile effusions of Enid Blyton. Characters were better developed, plots less unlikely, and the supporting cast of local people respected rather than patronised.

By the time she stopped writing for children, the massive convulsions in the 1960s about what was expected of modern children's books in terms both of their subject matter and their intended audience were beginning to make her work look old-fashioned. But in her day the well-crafted stories she wrote proved just the thing for those children who either shared the same type of middle-class background and assumptions, or else wished that they and their families did.

Born in Belper, Derbyshire, in 1912, the daughter of a vicar, her childhood was spent at Rye harbour in Sussex. On holiday from boarding school, Monica passed the time with local fishermen, once climbing down a drainpipe to join in some night sailing—a detail repeated in *The Summer of the Great Secret* (1948).



Edwards: well-crafted stories with a sense of place

When she married Bill Edwards in 1933, she found the perfect consort: someone who shared her love of the countryside and a strong sense of fun (the couple practised acrobatics for some time, selling postcards of their most spectacular balancing acts). A son and a daughter followed, and eventually a first book, *Wish for a Pony* (1947).

This was written for her daughter, who was transformed into one of the two heroines Tamzin and Rissa, the other based on her best friend. The huge success of this book later irritated its author, unwilling to have herself written off as just another hack producing pony stories. But it provided her with a set of characters situated in the Romney Marsh that was to last through another 14 titles, reaching out into other

topics such as smuggling, floods and storms at sea. The Romney Marsh was already celebrated among adults as a setting for Russell Thorndike's racy Dr Syn stories: Edwards made it doubly celebrated for younger readers. In 1947 she bid at an auction for a derelict farm in Surrey. Very much to her surprise this was successful and she and her husband became first-time farmers, learning as they went. She was always very concerned with a sense of place (many of her adventures can be followed on an Ordnance Survey map), and Punchbowl Farm, Thursley, became the setting for a parallel series of 11 more adventures. The child characters of the farm help out with daily chores such as rounding up the sheep, stumbling across occasional buried treasure or episodes of

time travel to living things up. Like Arthur Ransome, she primarily wrote about holidays: a time for gulping down breakfast, brushing moss and leaves off jodhpurs before going on to buckle the pony's throat lash, chatting to friends or planning picnics. Interjections rarely got fiercer than "Great Snakes!", and when the thoroughly competent young heroines were untypically at a loss they admitted to "not having the foggiest".

She was never a great writer but always a hard-working and honest one, much preferring gritty details of farming life to an unreal world of cops and robbers where child characters always know best. In her last children's book, *A Wind is Blowing* (1969), adolescence itself becomes the topic, with Tamzin realising that her feelings for Mervyn Fairbrass go beyond the chumminess experienced in earlier stories.

With the author's own family grown up, this was a natural time to stop writing about her fictional children, themselves now at the threshold of adulthood. Instead, she produced five more autobiographical books about Punchbowl Farm, describing animal life based on her own field notes and nocturnal photographs. She also wrote about her husband's serious tractor accident and the decision eventually to sell the farm. The couple stayed on in a small house built in the valley they both loved. Bill died in 1990, and with his wife's death the land is to be donated to the Woodland Trust—a characteristically generous gift from an author whose unaffected love of the countryside shone through everything she wrote.

—Nicholas Tucker



'The lifeboat rushed past them, down into the wild black sea': illustration by Geoffrey Whittam for Edwards's *Storm Ahead* (1953, Puffin Story Books 1957)

Maurice Schumann

Maurice Schumann was a young second lieutenant, a former journalist, when General de Gaulle appointed him to be the regular Free French spokesman on the BBC, writes Leonard Miall (further to the obituary by Professor Maurice Larkin, 12 February). He had not had previous broadcasting experience and tended to speak in a high squeaky voice. Once when he telephoned my secretary replied, "Oui, Mademoiselle Schumann."

We were too cowardly to tell him his high voice sounded silly. Instead we said that we believed that his words would go better through the German jamming if he pitched them as low as possible. Schumann duly practised and soon became an excellent broadcaster.

In one of de Gaulle's first broadcasts he had appealed to French submarine captains to bring their ships to Britain to continue the struggle. In course of time they began to arrive. Maurice Schumann brought the first to Broadcasting House to speak to France. He was a huge man with a big black beard and a very deep voice. With horror we heard Schumann tell him to pitch his voice as low as possible in order to go through the jamming. We had to take him aside to assure him that his normal voice would be OK.

Chris Philip

As the former owner of Lakeside, the property bought in 1983 by Chris Philip and Denis Guérault, I would like to correct the impression given by Michael Leppman (obituary of Chris Philip, 11 February), that the "previous owner was a daffodil collector who had dug up all his bulbs, leaving the garden a barren waste", writes Michael Jefferson-Brown.

I was at the time a commercial daffodil breeder and grew all my stock a mile or two away from the garden. Not a single bulb or plant was dug up out of the garden before or at the time of the sale. We were delighted to hand over the garden to Chris and Denis, who were both obviously going to enjoy and develop it.

To suggest that we left it "a barren waste" is the opposite of the truth; once or twice Denis and Chris contacted us after they moved into Lakeside to say they were contemplating certain plantings and works in the garden and hoped my wife and I would not mind—a human and pleasing touch from two people who from our first meeting became our very good friends.

—Steve Voce

Attila Zoller



Attila Cornelius Zoller, guitarist, born Visegrad, Hungary 13 June 1927; married; died Townsend, Vermont 25 January 1998.

"I could only stay three weeks on my first visit to the United States in 1956," said the guitarist

Attila Zoller. "But it changed my views of jazz completely. I found out the point of the music on that trip when I heard Clifford Brown on trumpet."

Zoller was born in Hungary in 1927. "My father was a music teacher and he started me on violin when I was four," he later recalled. "When I was nine I started to like the trumpet better than the violin so I practised in secret on a borrowed horn. When he found out, my father didn't mind, and so I played trumpet for seven years in my high school's symphony orchestra."

At the end of the Second World War, the 17-year-old went to Budapest to find work as a musician. "It was hard to find work as a trumpeter, so I switched to guitar and taught myself the chords from piano music." In 1947, still unaware of

jazz, he joined one of the top commercial bands in the capital and it was then that he first heard Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie on the radio.

"Like most things, records were very hard to get in Hungary then. So, in 1948, just before they closed the border with Austria, I walked across the mountains with nothing but my guitar and some changes of underwear stuffed in the case."

In Vienna he met Vera Auer, who at that time played jazz on the accordion. "We formed a quartet together—and then we heard records of the George Shearing Quintet which included a vibraphone." It was impossible to buy such an instrument, so Zoller decided to manufacture one himself. "I moulded the keys myself in a foundry. The tuning was terri-

ble!" This feat of engineering was typical of Zoller's ingenuity; he later patented several musical devices in the United States.

Zoller and Auer worked together for five years, winning first prize at a jazz contest in Vienna in 1951. They played for US Army clubs in Turkey and then in 1954 Zoller went alone to Holland, and saw his first American jazz musicians—the Jazz at the Philharmonic unit and Lionel Hampton's band.

He settled in Frankfurt, where he met the pianist Jutta Hipp and the trombonist Albert Mangelsdorff. For two years he worked with Jutta Hipp and they joined the band of the tenor player Hans Koller. He met the American alto saxophonist Lee Konitz in 1955 when the two shared a concert bill in Cologne, and Konitz re-

mained a friend for many years.

When he returned to Hungary from a second trip to the US in October 1958, Zoller formed his most famous trio, which included the expatriate Americans Oscar Pettiford (on bass) and Kenny Clarke (on drums). However, Zoller and Pettiford were injured in a car crash; the group broke up and the guitarist went back to America, to stay, in March 1959.

On arrival, thanks to the pianist John Lewis and the guitarist Jim Hall, he was awarded a scholarship to the Lenox School of Jazz in Massachusetts. He joined Chico Hamilton's eclectic quintet, leaving when he got married, because he wanted to stay in New York rather than tour, and formed the International Jazz Quartet with the Belgian tenor player Bob-

by Jaspas; they returned to work in Germany and Belgium for a few months. In 1962, Zoller won an award for the soundtrack music of the German film *The Bread of Our Early Years*.

Jaspas became ill and Zoller returned to New York and joined a group led by the flautist Herbie Mann. "I was pretty much restricted to certain things" was his way of saying that Mann didn't let him play much jazz, but he stayed until 1965. He formed an alliance with the band's pianist, Don Friedman, and they worked as a duo both in the United States and on a trip to Germany between Mann's bookings. The European trips became annual recordings and at concerts. He also played briefly for Red Nor-

vo in 1966 and for Benny Goodman in 1967. In 1968 he became co-leader of a trio, "Zo-Ko-Ma", made up of himself, Lee Konitz and Albert Mangelsdorff. They backed Astrud Gilberto when she toured Japan in 1970.

Settling in Vermont in 1972, Zoller started the Vermont Jazz Centre. He made some remarkable duet recordings in Frankfurt with the guitarist Jimmy Raney in 1979 and 1980. Despite ill-health, Zoller continued to play and record until last month.

He was particularly moved by a special celebration put together by 45 of his jazz peers at the American Guitar Museum in New Hyde Park, New York, to commemorate his long service to jazz. The fourteenth of April is now officially Attila Zoller Day in New Hyde Park. —Steve Voce

Peter Longbottom

Peter Longbottom, cyclist:
born Huddersfield 13 May
1959; married Lyn Snowden;
died York 10 February 1998.

Peter Longbottom was the heart and soul of his sport. A Commonwealth and Olympic racer whose life was cycling, he died on Tuesday at 38, riding his bike.

Longbottom, a valued and respected teammate to many, notably Chris Boardman, gave unstintingly throughout his ca-

reer which as an international lasted 17 years until the 1994 Commonwealth Games in British Columbia, where he won a silver medal in the 100km team time trial.

His first Commonwealth medal was a 1980 bronze in the same discipline riding with Boardman, whose career was to take him on to world and Olympic titles, and fame in the Tour de France.

Peter Longbottom was often the unsung worker behind the

triumph of others, and that was a role he happily accepted, internationally and at home. Yet ambition was never far away when he raced. If he could not win, then he made sure that it was one of his team.

He was a "puck" selection for the international Milk Race for 10 years. Not as a sure-fire success, but as the tactical brain who could organise his men on the road, and lift them with a joke when the day went bad.

Only one thing matched his

appetite for the sport. "He was an astonishing eater, but built like a rake," said Jim Hendry, Britain's national team director in the late 1970s, and now chief executive of the British Cycling Federation.

"At one training camp everyone had had double portions. That was enough for them, but Peter finished off a lemon meringue pie intended for six. It all went to fuel his tremendous work-rate for his team."

"He was one of a few who

had a lot of success and still held down a full-time job. As a rider you could not buy his experience and knowledge. He was not just a road racer. He tried it all."

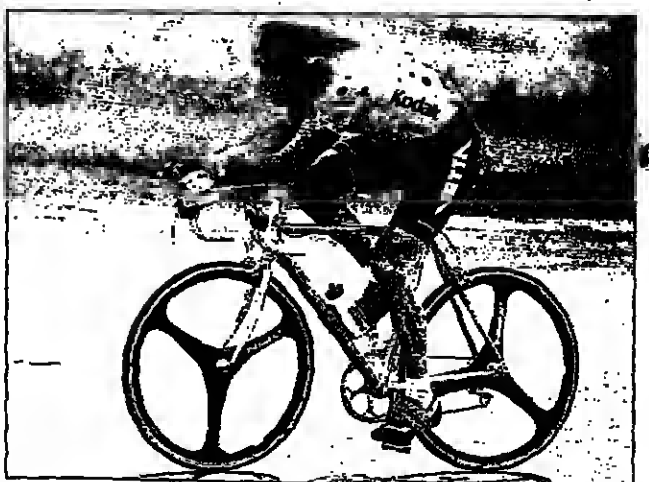
The man from Malton twice failed to make the final Olympic selection. When he was picked for the Barcelona Games at 33 he was one of the oldest cyclists to represent his country.

Longbottom retired from racing two years ago, ending a career that was as close to true amateur as anyone could find

in these cash-grabbing days. After several years as a surveyor with Ryedale District Council, he had become a director of a building company in York.

Even in repose he was restlessly inspiring others in their racing. "He did not walk away from the sport, but began working with younger riders," said Peter Woodworth, whose club, North Wimal Velo, recruited Longbottom. "That was really impressive," he said.

—Robin Nicholl



Longbottom in 1995

Photograph: Phil O'Connor

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS
ROBERTS: On 28 December 1997, to Robert Roberts and Janet Bontrou, a son, Huw Ewan Roberts, a brother for Mair, Jesse and Owain.

THELUSSON: On 10 February, to Jenny (née Owens) and James, a daughter, Abigail.

DEATHS
KLEINSCHMIDT: Mary (née Barker), formerly of Grahamsdown, died in Cape Town on 2 February. Much-loved mother of Anton, Gerda and Mark.

MEMORIAL SERVICES
HARRIS: A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of David Harris, former chairman and chief executive of Neale UK Ltd, will be held at Crofton Parish Church on Thursday 12 March at 3pm.

MORGAN: A Memorial Service for Dyfrig Gruffydd Morgan, Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge 1969-71, and University Lecturer in Agricultural Botany 1959-97, will be held in St John's College Chapel on Saturday 28 February 1998 at 12 noon.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry, Mounted Band

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Michael Attenborough, Principal Associate Director, Royal Shakespeare Company, 48; Mr David Banks, Consultant Editor, *Sunday Mirror*, 50; Mr Liam Brady, football manager, 42; Professor Derek Burke, former Vice-Chancellor, University of East Anglia, 68; Dr John Clayton, former Apothecary to HM Household, Windsor, 77; Miss Margaret Collins, former Matron-in-Chief, OARNS, 71; Mr Brian Deacon, actor, 49; Miss Eileen Farrell, soprano, 78; Professor Janet Finch, Vice-Chancellor, Keele University, 52; Baroness Flather, councillor and local government worker, 64; Mr Peter Gabriel, rock musician, 43; Mr Arpad Guncz, President of Hungary, 76; Mr John Healey MP, 38; Lord Lewis of Newham, Warden, Robinson College, Cambridge, 70; Mr John McAlonan MP, 50; Miss Kim Nook, actress, 65; Mr Leonard Poscoe, cricketer, 48; Lord Peyton of Yewill, former government minister, 79; Lord Pym, former government minister, 76; Mr Oliver Reed, actor, 60; Miss Margaretta Scott, actress, 86; Mr George Segal, actor, 64; Dr Donald Sykes, former Principal, Mansfield College, Oxford, 68.

Anniversaries

Births: Eleanore Farjeon, writer, 1881; Georges Simenon, novelist, 1901. **Deaths:** Dame Christabel

1958; Jean Renoir, film-maker, 1979. On this day: William and Mary ascended the throne, 1689; Alexander Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Soviet Union, 1974. Today is the Feast Day of St Catherine de Ricci, St Ermenilda or Ermenegild, St Leodegarius or Leodegar, St Martinian the Hermit, St Modomoc, St Polycarpus of Melitene and St Stephen of Rieli.

Lunches

The Queen
The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh held a lunch party yesterday at Buckingham Palace. The guests were: Professor Ernest Rens (Equal Opportunities Commissioner for Wales), Miss Eileen Thompson (Lecturer, Lord Bingham of Cornwall (Lord Chief Justice of England's Sir Neil Ouseley (Director, Science Museum), Air Chief Marshal Sir David Coslett (Air Member for Personnel and Air Officer Commanding in Chief, The Royal Air Force), Lord Bingham of Cornwall (Lord Chief Justice of England's Sir Neil Ouseley (Director, Science Museum), Air Chief Marshal Sir David Coslett (Air Member for Personnel and Air Officer Commanding in Chief, The Royal Air Force), Lord Bingham of Cornwall (Lord Chief Justice of England's Sir Neil Ouseley (Director, Science Museum), Air Chief Marshal Sir David Coslett (Air Member for Personnel and Air Officer Commanding in Chief, The Royal Air Force).

Synagogue services

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 4.57pm.

United Synagogue: 020-343 8999. Federation of Synagogues: 020-222 2245. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 020-222 1663. Reform Synagogue of Great Britain: 020-349 4731. Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 020-789 7273. New London Synagogue (Masorti): 020-789 7273.

LAW REPORT: 13 FEBRUARY 1998

Lack of diligence by solicitors is unacceptable

Solicitors must understand that inordinate delay and a lack of diligence in the conduct of actions was totally unacceptable, and that orders of the court must be obeyed.

Lownes v Babcock Power Ltd (Court of Appeal (Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Potter)) 11 February 1998

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal of the plaintiff, Robert Lownes, against the refusal of a 14-day extension of time in which to serve a schedule of damages in his action claiming damages for personal injury against his employers.

The plaintiff's claim arose out of an accident at work which had left him a paraplegic. His trade union had instructed

a firm of solicitors, who were extremely experienced in the field, to act for him. The writ was issued in 1990. In December 1993 a different partner in the firm took over the conduct of the case. In August 1996, after a complete failure on the part of the plaintiff's solicitors to serve a schedule of damages on the defendants' solicitors, they applied for the claim to be dismissed for want of prosecution.

An "unless" order was made by consent, giving the plaintiff's solicitor 28 days to lodge and serve a schedule of damages, in default of which the action would be dismissed with costs. The schedule was not prepared in time, and the plaintiff's solicitor applied for a 14-day extension of time in which to lodge it. The appli-

cation was refused by the district judge, and an appeal to the High Court judge was dismissed. The plaintiff appealed.

Berni Hymor QC (Thompson's, Sheriff) for the plaintiff; *Anthony Goldsmith QC* (Whitfield Hallam Goodall, Densbury) for the defendants.

Lord Woolf MR said that the case had been properly conducted until the new partner had taken over in December 1993. After that there had been wholly unjustified and inexcusable delay.

If an "unless" order were not treated as a last opportunity to put a party's house in order, the court had no way of ensuring that its orders would be obeyed, and delays such as those in the present case would continue to occur. To allow the

appeal would mean that parties could ignore orders with impunity.

Although the consequences of dismissing the appeal would be serious for the plaintiff, he would still get his proper compensation. In practice, the damages would be met by the plaintiff's solicitors' insurers rather than by the defendants' insurers.

It was the duty of the solicitors, as officers of the court, to do all in their power to see that the plaintiff personally suffered no more than was necessary as a result of their default. In such a situation the minimum that they should do was to ensure that the plaintiff received independent advice at the earliest opportunity. In the present case independent

leading counsel had been instructed to advise the plaintiff, but it would have been preferable for him to have been instructed by independent solicitors.

Delays in cases such as the present had an effect not only on the plaintiff, but also on the costs incurred by both sides, and, where insurers were involved, the cost of premiums. The administration of justice was also affected, since the amount of court time taken up resulted in other cases being put back, and the reputation of civil justice was damaged. The message to the profession which should be heard and learnt was that the standard of diligence displayed in the instant case was totally unacceptable.

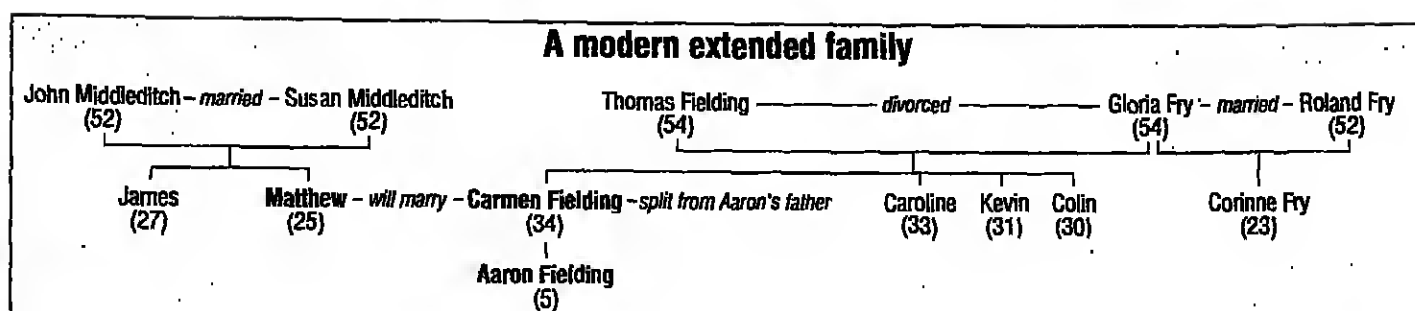
—Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

The new ties that bind

The age of separation and changing partnerships brings children into new families, often surprisingly successfully. By Jack O'Sullivan



MARRIAGE FOR THE MILLENNIUM



The instant family: Carmen Fielding, right, front, is to wed Matthew Middleditch, centre, providing a new father for her son, Aaron, shown with him, and 'grandparents' John and Susan Middleditch. Carmen is with her mother, step-father and Aaron

UNTIL the past few months, five-year-old Aaron had no dad. He was also short of a set of grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. And he knew it. "Right from a very early age he felt he was missing out on something," says his mother, Carmen Fielding, whose former partner abandoned her when she became pregnant. "At nursery and school he would see other children with both parents. He felt left out."

Not any more. Aaron may have lost out because his mother's relationship broke down, but he is also gaining from an equally modern phenomenon – the creation of extended families where there is no blood tie between immediate relatives.

Aaron suddenly finds himself with a father and many other close relations. The reason? His mother is getting married.

Carmen's marriage to Matthew Middleditch will not take place until the summer, but Aaron is not waiting for the formalities. "He already thinks of Matthew as his dad," says his mother. "He calls him dad. He is the only dad he has ever known. He misses him and gets very upset when he is away. When Matthew first went away, Aaron believed that he wasn't coming back. But he has grown to trust him. He boasts about his dad at school. Often when Matthew is here, he is the one who gets him from school, cooks his dinner, reads him a story and goes into school to help out in his class."

Matthew's life has also been transformed. "Initially, it was very strange, sud-

denly becoming a dad. But now it's lovely. I treat Aaron as my son. I see it as completely natural. It makes me feel really good."

There were difficulties. "Carmen and I probably had more pressure than usual when we were starting our relationship," Matthew acknowledges. "I had to be sure that I could love Aaron as well. He would have been very hurt if he felt he was getting everything and then it all went wrong and that chap in mummy's life suddenly went away. But Aaron is a lovely lad and you can't help loving him."

"People ask us about where Aaron will stay when we go on our honeymoon. It has never crossed my mind or Carmen's that he wouldn't come with us. He is becoming my son and I am becoming his father. So of course he will come along."

Matthew was not the only person to find himself taking on more than usual when he popped the question. His own parents realised that they too would need to be imaginative. John Middleditch, Matthew's father, recalls meeting the couple. "My wife, Susan, and Matthew's godmother were there. The comment of one lady to the other was: 'It looks like you are going to be instant grandparents. They had seen the chemistry, put two and two together and got five.'"

At first the Middleditches were apprehensive. Matthew is 25, Carmen 34. He was educated at public school and had followed his father's footsteps in joining the forces. His comfortable upbringing in the Home Counties does not immediately sit easily

with Carmen's life as a single mother, living in north-east London and relying on a secretary's salary to raise Aaron.

"Until they declared their intention to get married," John Middleditch says, "I would honestly have counselled Matthew to think, think and think again."

Meanwhile, Carmen was also worried. "I absolutely dreaded the prospect of meeting his parents. I believed they would hate me the minute they saw me. I tried to put myself in their shoes and imagine the picture they might have of me. Although I have to say, if they had any preconceived ideas about me, they didn't show them, because they went out of their way to make me feel welcome."

"I remember when I went down for the weekend the first time, the atmosphere was a little tense, but I decided to be myself. Matthew's father said to me: 'You're a bad influence on my son.' I thought 'oh dear'. He said: 'You're a bad influence because he is smoking.' So I said: 'Hang on. It's the other way around. Until I met him I hadn't smoked for a year. Now I'm smoking 20 a day thanks to your son.' From then on, the weekend was really good."

John Middleditch's biggest surprise was not, in fact, meeting Carmen. "I remember a little voice cried out and said: 'Mummy, I looked down, saw this chirpy little face and realised there was more to all this than met the eye.'"

Yet, despite these initial reservations, everyone is getting on well now. "Aaron will

call us exactly what any natural offspring would call his grandparents – grandma and grandpa," John Middleditch proudly declares. Aaron will be christened on the wedding day in the same village church as Matthew was himself christened and the Middleditches were married.

But some adjustment is still needed. "I was a little poleaxed by the news," says Mr Middleditch, 52. "Normally when you become a grandfather, you have time to prepare. There is the arrival of the baby two years before it starts shouting out your name. I was dealt a fait accompli. He is a bright little five-year-old, sparky and innocent, keen to please and converse. But at first we didn't know the toys he likes. It takes a while for two old fogies like us to get on his wavelength. It's a challenge for him and for us."

"Aaron is perfectly at home with them," Carmen says. "They always make a fuss of him. At Christmas, they bought him a kit for making a gingerbread house. John, Sue and Aaron spent hours making the house together. It was great." For Carmen, this modern way of creating a family has brought her a husband, a father for her son and in-laws with whom she is still feeling her way. But it is not all so new for her. She also had the experience of acquiring a new father.

"My mother split up from my natural father when I was eight," she says, "and we didn't see him again. So there were four of us. I was the eldest and the others were seven, six and five. We were wild. We did

as we pleased. Then my mum got remarried to Roland and they subsequently had another child together. Corinne is technically my half-sister though I have never thought of her in that way."

Roland began hinging in rules and laying down the law. At the time I resented him, but now I am a parent I really admire and respect him for what he did. If it wasn't for him I probably wouldn't have turned out as well as I have. I think of him as my dad. He is my dad. He has devoted the best years of his life to bringing us up."

So what makes these modern-day extended families work? The first condition is obvious – the will to make them work. Perhaps most important is the presence of men who like children and are prepared to become parents to them even when there is no blood link – be it as fathers or grandfathers. Matthew, John and Roland all break with the traditional stereotype of step-fathers as problematic, indeed potentially dangerous to children. Without them, Aaron would have neither a father nor a single grandfather, since he is out of contact with all his male blood relatives.

Roland will be there to finish the job when Carmen marries in the summer. "Over the years, he has worried over me and cried over me. I know that," she says. "Now, he is very proud of me. He wants to give me away and help pay for the wedding." John and Matthew will each take up their roles. Aaron will be christened. It will be a fresh start.

Doc Martens are flying the flag for England

By Melanie Rickey

THEY'VE been adopted by women, lauded by pop stars and even ordered in bulk by the Pope. It's years since Doctor Martens were thought of as footwear fit only for a bower boy, but now all the old connotations of violence and football fan aggression could well be revived.

Dr Martens is selling a version of its classic eight-hole boot customised with flags to trade on the patriotism created by the World Cup. Come June and the start of the tournament, will we see row upon row of xenophobic feet stomping out a patriotic chant? Might there not be a moment when they stop stomping and start stamping on the heads of the rival fans?

Gary Nelson of the Professional Footballers' Association thinks that if that happens in France this summer, it won't be the fault of the boots. "If it [violence] is going to happen it will happen. It's nothing to do with what boots a person is wearing," he says. "It's the person inside the boots."

This is not the first time that Doctor Martens has marketed patriotic boots. It says it is merely responding to a demand for boots which feature flags. "We have sold customised Union Jack boots for a long time, at least three or four years, and are enjoying success with boots featuring the European Union and US flags too," said a company representative. Denmark and Norway (among the first to qualify for the World Cup) have already bought and sold thousands of beflagged boots, and Jamaica, which has just qualified, should be next.

The flag might be the thing which convinces a fan to buy, but any Doc devotee will tell you that no boot could be better for all those hours hanging around a football stadium. First favoured by builders for their comfortable heat-sealed air cushioned soles, Dr Martens became a fashion phenomenon in the Seventies when skinheads appropriated the 1460 ankle boot (still the biggest seller) as uniform. Today, the factories, based in the Midlands, make 220,000 pairs of shoes and boots a day, meeting demand for a market that was worth £57m in 1991, and a whopping £250m in 1997.

The company is closely involved with fashion sponsorship: the St Martin's MA graduation which rounds off London Fashion Week will benefit from its patronage, as will the designer Sonja Nuttall, who is using the classic six-eyelet Derby boot for her forthcoming show because of their timeless, androgynous, appeal. Last season the company sponsored fashion newcomer Andrew Grosse. Add to that the Dr Martens football league, a grass-roots semi professional organisation based in the Midlands, and you have a brand that means something to everyone.



Booting the colour: the new look

Each new departure is a matter that naturally interests us



JOHN LYTTLE

CAN journalists write about death – their own deaths – in the unworthy medium of newspapers? The late Ruth Picardie did in *The Observer* and struck a major chord. The seriously ill John Diamond does in *The Times* and provides a comprehension others would do well to emulate. It's all there: rage, rejection, sobbing, laughing, self-pity, sentimentality, courage and chemotherapy. What any sentient being would expect. This old news that is somehow forever new. All that's fit to print. The older you grow, the more you appreciate death. I wouldn't say understand, because ... It's obvious, isn't it. Ruth Picardie and John Diamond handled the quicksilver of their lives, and it's both a valid and senseless exercise. Simply put, what they – what we – try to sort out is if death is the Big Question or the Big Answer. Who's sure? Who could be?

Decca Aitkenhead. In this month's *Modern Review* she accuses Ruth and John of, I guess, putting on an act, exploiting their own suffering. Decca looks

such cheap crowd-pleasing – including Ruth's sister, Justine. A crowd pleasing industry is being created, apparently. A cheat of a "cancer" school newspaper, it transpires, just can't deal with death. Decca says. You can see why certain pundits say Decca is out to create a reputation and screw the hurt inflicted. And the pundits may have a point. Decca's an ex-colleague – as was Ruth – and I like her enormously. She's incorrigibly smart. But I'd be a liar if I pretended that one of the things I liked most wasn't a determination to be noticed.

Still, let's grant Decca what she denies others, while on so rationally ascribing the basest of motives. Let's give her the benefit of the doubt. I'd much prefer to view "Before They Say Goodbye", with its evasions, omissions and muddle, as denial. For though Decca declares that writing about death in a newspaper is tawdry, voyeuristic entertainment, the interesting thing is that she painstakingly duplicates the crime. Why? Perhaps because death threatens that sense of invulnerability those in their

twenties enjoy. (Oh, to have it back.) Or perhaps "Before They Say Goodbye" is Decca's wholly unconscious address to her mother, whom she lost young. Or perhaps it is a scam: if these souls are brave for detailing their demises, how much braver am I for having a go? Whatever, intoning Decca's "can't do this" is genuflecting to her sloppiest notion: that there exists a "correct" way to write about death, and Ruth and John failed/failed morally, ethically and, get this, aesthetically. And as human history proves, this is ... Crap. There is no right way. No wrong way. Only your way.

So, denial. Nothing else fully explains – or excuses – Decca's inability to grasp what might appear clear to the rest of us. For instance, when Ruth joked about being "privileged to live through the era of John Frieda Restructuring Serum" it's "sugared tragedy" ... any line that edged towards the unbearable was softened by a sweetener. A sweetener, or may be just ... gallows humour. A coping mechanism that the world is not merely fa-

milial with, but often sees beyond, to shadows behind. Yes, gallows humour protects. Duh. It also affords a fleeting glimpse. It has to be fleeting. We nag at death, yet no philosopher, no religion, no work of art has cracked it.

Decca doesn't get this either. Decca announces that to write of death in a broadsheet is to provide "a sentimental illusion of the truth" (that word again), but why not a newspaper. Even if the pages furnish "emotional pornography ... a pleasurable little weep" for some, what of it? Others derive comfort and peace. Disaster, famine, rape, murder, war and the dimensions of the Clinton penis also provide emotional porn for a few.

Does anyone seriously believe newspapers should ban reporting on them? And surely Decca knows that once a piece is written how individuals respond to it is beyond the author's control for grabs? Witness reaction to "Before They Say Goodbye".

This column frequently dashes itself against death, as regular readers are aware. Death from AIDS, suicide, in the family, among friends. Decca: "We nag at death, yet no philosopher, no religion, no work of art has cracked it".

once said she was a regular reader too, yet I find myself copied into unkind equations, condemned for writing about Ruth and rushing to "claim bereavement status".

I honestly have no idea how to rebut that. All I can say is that I wrote about Ruth to hold on to her a while longer. Foolish, granted. I'll own up to this, also. Part of me is enraged by Decca's sophistry, by the fact that she's been brought on too fast and the

cracks are showing. Consider: an entire "school" of cancer is revived, as it two columns – one column, now – constituted a movement of bathos and "bad taste". Well, death is in very bad taste indeed, and, besides, schools grow. This one shrinks. And there are worse forms of cancer journalism to fret over. While Decca is busy conjuring a corrupt marketplace she forgets *The Modern Review* and its brand of arrested adolescence, where apostles jostle to out-do the faux "plain speaking" of Julie Burchill, carping at dillards exploring their mortality, but otherwise happy to force "unwarranted intimacy" by dishing the dirt on her abortions. Go figure.

Go figure, too, why deceased *Guardian* columnist Oscar Moore is exempted for telling us about HIV, and how this has nothing to do with Decca working at *The Guardian*, but because Oscar was writing about "a new disease ... and cancer has no mystery." (Huh?) Actually, by the time Oscar wrote about AIDS it was hardly "new". And I'd wager that a quick vox pop would raise doubts as to which sickness passers-by are more informed about. But Decca could be sorting out something deeper here. From start to finish, she conflates and confuses cancer and death while pretending division. Perhaps because cancer killed her mother. May be she must establish a distinction, even at the bewildering cost of AIDS good/cancer bad.

Come. The cause of death is (mainly) immaterial. What draws and repels us is the process; this common yet unique journey we all must take. Decca supposedly stares death down, but she's the one, not Ruth, not John, averting eyes – and heart and intellect.

A proposition. Death has many rituals but very few rules. Arbitrarily imposing some you've prepared earlier is cruel, not least to one's self. Or ... hell? Who knows? I don't. What can be said for certain is life's too short. Which is sort of Decca's point, too, so let's expect her to get it any day soon. And if I over-estimate, then I can at least look forward to when Decca finally reveals the "proper" method, and I can at last learn, turn and confront my own legion of demons.

We're shown up again. For once, Britain should follow the French



EDITOR: ROSIE ROYCOTT
DEPUTY EDITOR: CHRIS BLACKHURST
ADDRESS: 1 CANADA SQUARE,
CANARY WHARF,
LONDON E14 5DL
TELEPHONE: 0171 293 2000
OR 0171 345 2000
FAX: 0171 293 2435
OR 0171 345 2435

The French government has just announced approval for a new high-speed rail link east of Paris, cutting journey times to Strasbourg by an hour and a half. That's France: a socialist government, dreams of glory and tons of Euro-sentiment (the train, said a minister would "optimise links between the axes of the Rhine and the Rhone"). Transport officials in this country don't talk that way. But that doesn't stop them getting out of their depth. This country, too, has its share of grand projects which run over time and over cost – the Jubilee Line in London being the most egregious current example. Yet we lack transport imagination, understanding transport infrastructure as a whole, planning and thinking strategically. Especially now that the plan for building a fast link to the Channel Tunnel has collapsed. It has to be revived, cherished and reconfigured.

Forget the nominal transport minister, Gavin Strang. The man on the mat is John

Prescott, Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions. Commissions. He is, by nature, a big spender who is marooned in a Cabinet where financial rectitude rules. He is a big-picture man, yet only in the minutest phraseology of intricate contracts is the dream of public-private financial partnership ever likely to be realised. It is he who has to put together transport and sustainable development: who but John Prescott is to see that new rail terminal at St Pancras, not to mention Stratford could serve to jump-start that "brownfield" building which is supposed to be the alternative to dumping concrete on the green belt.

Fate – the paucity of imagination and conceptual confusions of the Thatcher and Major governments, to be precise – has stacked Mr Prescott's in-tray high. The clock is ticking down to formal revocation of London and Continental Railways' contract. Replacements are knocking at DETR's door, eager to state terms. But

they all involve substantial extra public money, either directly (Eurotunnel is asking for more than £2bn, most of it upfront) or indirectly (Railtrack would like to negotiate a cross-subsidy from higher track usage charges elsewhere). Meanwhile, the Government faces the prospect of re-acquiring formal ownership of Eurostar, the company running cross-Channel services: public ownership is also the option if railway franchisees fail to live up to their contractual obligations.

Behind all this lies a term unstated in all the rhetoric about Private Finance Initiatives, contracting-out and privatisation. It's what happens when private capital fails. Theoretically, contracts can be re-let and new providers brought in. But what happens in the meantime and what if the new contractors use the threat of a break in service to blackmail the state? That is John Prescott's position now.

The Government could, it is true, abandon the idea of a fast link to the Chan-

nel. With it probably goes the profitability of Eurostar, a boost to economic growth thanks to better through-roads from Birmingham, Manchester, Scotland and Ireland, let alone the specific benefits to London's East End of making Stratford once again a great transport node. But how much additional investment of public money is all that worth?

The answer, in principle, must surely be no less than the £2bn figure being bandied around – albeit payable over a period of years, which would not need to start till after that magic hour on 1 April 1999 when Labour's commitment to Tory spending plans comes to an end. But Mr Prescott and the Treasury ministers he eventually has to convince know there is a more important question than how much money. It is how to assure the state that private sector partners are reliable, at least more reliable than the members of the LCR consortium. Their ranks include two existing rail franchisees, National Express and

Virgin and if, after what has happened, their conduct of their railways is not brought under the closest inspection by ministers, they ought to be. Richard Branson may have emerged from the libel courts a people's hero; he may be Mr Blair's most acceptable capitalist face. But Mr Branson the blond controller needs policing.

Once, when Labour first came to power in this country, the talk was of the state taking over great chunks of private capital. During the Thatcher era, private capital could do no wrong – the best the state could do was retreat. We surely now know better. In large-scale infrastructure projects neither the state nor private capital is superior as financier or manager. But we have learnt the hard way that the state is indispensable, as projector, guarantor and backstop. Exactly how much the Government should spend on the fast link to the Channel is up for negotiation, but it can and should commit itself now to the principle of full-blooded participation.

Post letters to Letters to the Editor
and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address.
Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

LETTERS

Assault on Iraq

Bombing Iraq will be immoral, impractical, and unjust. Immoral for killing people without justification. Impractical because we won't get all the sites. Unjust because the rationale stems from an unbalanced political view of the region.

This is the last throw of an ineffective UN/US/UK policy. Iraq can easily re-acquire chemical and biological, if not nuclear, weapons after an inspection.

The UK must think and speak for herself, however friendly we may be towards America. We should develop a new policy based on assistance and support for the people of Iraq and a proper military balance in the region.

We should realise that sanctions are confirming anti-Western attitudes in the minds of ordinary people in Iraq and in other Middle Eastern states, commence an aid initiative aimed at support and development for Iraq, rather like that undertaken by America and others for Germany after 1945, and take our improved status with the Arabs as an opportunity to help ease tension between the Arab world and Israel, to improve prospects for peace in the region.

JOHN DEXTER
Hythe, Hampshire

What guarantees can the Prime Minister offer that the following scenario will not occur?

After a bombing campaign by the US and its allies, Saddam grants the UN inspectors unfettered access to all the sites that they wish to examine. Then after several months he throws them out on some trumped-up charge, forcing the West once again to mount a military response.

Meanwhile it is powerless Iraqi civilians that will have to suffer the mayhem of these bombing campaigns in addition to the suffering already imposed upon them through economic sanctions.

HASSAN ABDULRAZZAK
New Malden, Surrey

In the first half of this century, this nation had to make a second enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure to prevent an evil dictator from running amok, mainly because the international organisations created after the first holocaust, and the national powers concerned, lacked the courage and sense to take timely preventive measures.

I find it difficult to see any moral distinction between the arguments of some Anglican bishops (letter, 11 February) and



those of the "peace at any price" advocates who forced me to waste six of the best years of my life, and many of my contemporaries to give their lives or limbs, in the dirty work required to exterminate the plague of Nazism.

LEWIS STRETCH
Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire

Your front page leader (12 February) speculates that perhaps President Bush should have pursued the defeated Iraqi army to Baghdad seven years ago and overthrown Saddam Hussein.

You may recall that no sooner had the Iraqi army been ejected from Kuwait than the chattering classes started wailing about America's "hidden agenda" and how overthrowing Saddam Hussein was not part of the UN's mandate. America and her allies were thus forced to withdraw with the job half done.

SUSAN COELHO
Teddington, Middlesex

What is it about the Labour Party that, when it achieves power, it rushes to support

even foolish and murderous aspects of American foreign policy? Did Labour learn nothing from its disgraceful support of the Vietnam war? Is this meant to be socialism?

LAWRENCE HANSEN
London SE1

'Lost' Prince John

Your report "Revealed: the lost prince of the House of Windsor" (11 February) is shocking: not simply because Prince John was hidden away because he had epilepsy or because he died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1919 at the age of 13 and was buried "very privately", but because eighty years on approximately 1,000 people die from epilepsy every year. This is the same as the combined annual mortality for cot deaths and Aids.

Most of these deaths are of young people, like the Prince, who "fell asleep" after a seizure and never woke up. It is also true that until very recently these deaths were kept hidden. The death certificates in many

cases would not reveal the cause of death as epilepsy. Indeed, until very recently few people were prepared to talk about sudden death in epilepsy. Although you state that Prince John's seizures had increased in severity and frequency before he died, and indeed that Queen Mary wrote that his death "came as a great release", epilepsy knows of many young people who have died whose condition has been considered sufficiently mild not to warrant medication.

Epilepsy affects 1.5 million people in the UK at some time in their lives, especially during childhood and old age. Yet the illness attracts little by way of research money – 20p per sufferer each year, compared to £250 per person with muscular dystrophy and £140 for multiple sclerosis. Current epilepsy services are inadequate; 40 per cent of people with epilepsy are seen by general physicians who have no training in neurology. The case for a national inquiry is that with improved management of seizures these tragic

deaths of young people may be prevented.

JANE HANNA
Director, Epilepsy Bereaved
PO Box 1777
Bournemouth, BH5 1YR
Dorset

Your feature on the photo albums of the Duke of Windsor is fascinating and very welcome, but Prince John is not a "lost prince".

Royal children in the early years of this century were not exposed to the kind of publicity their descendants face today; but, far from being hidden, Prince John's existence and appearance were made known to the public through photographs.

I have 17 old picture postcards showing the Prince on his own, and a further 35 of him with a brother or sister, or in larger groups. These date from 1905, the year he was born, to 1916. Other photographs appeared in magazines, newspapers and books.

Too often the story of Prince John is used as evidence that the Royal Family were unnaturally

cold and unfeeling to their children: your reporters are not the first to suggest that he was hidden away as an embarrassment. George V and Queen Mary gave him the best and most loving treatment any parents could have provided, by the standards of the day. Kept safe within the protective circle of the family, John commuted from London to Windsor, to Balmoral and Sandringham, with his brothers and sister, and he did meet visitors and play with other children.

Theodore Roosevelt met him at Buckingham Palace in 1911, and described a solid, cheery little boy with no fear of his father. It was only in 1917 that John was moved to Wood Farm on doctors' advice, because his fits had become so frequent and so severe, and it was obvious that he did not have long to live. He was accompanied by the nurse who had looked after him from birth, and his family kept in close touch and visited regularly.

CHARLOTTE ZEEVAT
Pett, East Sussex

Business rates

Simon Sperry is wrong to assume his business rates were high in 1989 because his local authority levied them (letter, 11 February).

The amount a business pays in rates depends on the its location; if the rateable value of the land the business occupies is high, its rates will be high. Returning the business rate to council control would not mean that the burden is shifted from residents to businesses, or vice versa; levels of domestic and non-domestic rates would be linked to ensure that one does not subsidise the other.

At present, businesses have no input into the level of rates they pay – returning the business rate would improve democracy. For local government to modernise, it must be able to represent all the community. Financial autonomy is a vital part of that modernisation.

SIR JEREMY BEECHAM
Chair
Local Government Association
London SW1

Pyramid publishing

Three cheers for Boyd Tonkin ("The real mystery of the Sphinx: why do falsehoods drive out truth?", 10 February), who goes straight to the heart of the matter of the huge increase in "alternative Egyptology" publications.

Most subjects have their shadowy sisters which feed on the lack of knowledge. These are tolerated, humoured or ignored by the academic world; think of alternative medicine, the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, or alchemy. Their popularity may reflect the public's healthy distrust of being told: "This is how it is, and there can be no argument about it." Publishers have rarely missed an opportunity to capitalise on it. But we should wake up to the real possibility that Egyptology as a serious subject gets confused in the public perception with theories which range from unorthodox to loony, and which at best ask questions without being able to provide satisfactory answers.

I have no problems explaining why the Egyptians built their pyramids, but could somebody please tell me why we are going to have the Millennium Dome?

JAROMIR MALEK
Griffith Institute
Ashmolean Museum
Oxford

Boyd Tonkin castigates book publishers for encouraging New Age nonsense about ancient Egypt to flourish – and rightly so. But what about the mote in his own eye?

The American Egyptologist Mark Lehner knows a thing or two about the Sphinx and the pyramids, having spent 20 years studying them in the field. Yet when he publishes a popular book on the subject (*The Complete Pyramids*, Thames and Hudson, 1997), packed with new ideas and verifiable information, what do the broadsheet literary editors do? They ignore him.

COLIN RIDLER
Archaeology Editor
Thames and Hudson Ltd
London WC1

Testing athletes

If the world's sporting authorities are so determined to stamp out drug use ("Champ fails drug test", 12 February), can we assume that they will also regularly test for traces of alcohol and nicotine in athletes?

LESLEY BROWNE
London SW1

On the day before tomorrow, some tender thoughts from little Ginger far away



MILES KINGSTON

My thanks to all those good and great who have taken space in the column this year to send their Valentine's Day messages. Not only does it bring me a tidy bit of income (and all tax-free!), it also saves me from having to write anything today. So here we go with our Grand St Valentine's Day Parade!

To Tonytumps – Bombs Away! You can come back to our little White House as often as you like! – his little Billkins.

LITTLE Tonykins – my very best wishes for doing everything I asked you to, and more! all my love, as long as you keep doing it! May the Sun keep provisionally shining on you ... Rupe

Salman ... we will meet again ... I am looking for you the whole time ... I am on your trail ... my aim is true ... from you know who ...

Darling – Though I am only five foot two,

And wear a ginger beard. Although I'm very serious And look a trifle weird. Although I'm going bald on top And wear thick horny specs, It's lots of love from me to you, Your Ginger Foreign Sex ...

A reader writes: Dear Mr Kingston, Don't tell me you're going to fill the whole column with these pathetic mock-political Valentines! Everyone does this, for heaven's sake! Can't you do something else?

Miles Kingston writes: Like what?

A reader writes: Well, like turn your attention to some of the serious issues of the day!

Miles Kingston writes: Like which?

A reader writes: Like the impending war with Saddam Hussein. Can you tell us what's going to happen?

Miles Kingston writes: Sure. They can't declare military action against Saddam Hus-

sein until they've decided on a name for the War.

A reader writes: A name?

Miles Kingston writes: That's right. A war fought by the Americans has to be packaged first – all the press rights sold, all the advertising sewn up, film rights auctioned off in Hollywood, all the big dealers signed up. And the biggest problem is how to brand-name a war. Great War was a brilliant name for a war. So was World War, even though a lot of the world wasn't involved in any world war. Cold War was a brilliant name for a peace, too. The trouble is, they've been through all this before when they liberated Kuwait, and so this time all the good names like Gulf War and Desert Storm have already been used up. They can't call it Gulf War II or Son of Gulf War, because they know that sequels never do

as well. So it's not Robin Cook they're waiting for – they can't start bombarding Iraq till they have got the name they need.

A reader writes: Hmmmm ... Talking of Robin Cook, Gaynor is a funny kind of name, isn't it? Have you ever come across a woman called Gaynor?

Miles Kingston writes: Yes. The film actress, Mitzi Gaynor.

A reader writes: Oh, right ...! Funny kind of name, Mitzi. Ever come across another woman ...?

Miles Kingston writes: Look, if you haven't got any intelligent questions, can I get back to my Valentine's Day messages?

A reader writes: Yes, just one more question. What kind of a name was Dodi? Was there any Englishman who ever had a name like that?

Miles Kingston: Yes. Ken Dodd.

A reader writes: Ken Dodd isn't much like Dodi.

Miles Kingston writes: No, but Dodd is known familiarly up North as Duddy, and in fact when Diana first started going out with Dodi, most of the North of England thought she was going out with Ken Dodd. Some still do, as a matter of fact, and that headline the other day, "I had Dodi's baby", caused a great fuss in parts of Lancashire. Any more questions?

A reader writes: No. You can get back to your tired old Valentine Day parodies now.

Miles Kingston writes: Thanks ... Queen Mumskis ... Cheers! Bottoms up! Let's drink to it ... Whoops! ... love from Boriskins ... RICHARD BRANSON I love you I love you I love you! from Richard Branson ...

Continued next year

Rupert Murdoch features in three challenges to Blair



DONALD
MACINTYRE
THE GENTLE ART
OF COMPROMISE

Rupert Murdoch – even since the spectacular defection of the *Sun* to its cause – still haunts the collective psyche of much of the Labour Party. Three unresolved issues, currently exercising the government's best minds, all have features in common, of which Mr Murdoch's looming presence, real or perceived, is only one. The newspaper industry has a direct commercial interest in the outcome of each. The public is less interested in them than the newspapers would like them to be. And finally, Tony Blair has directly focussed his lawyer's mind on all of them.

The first concerns the trade unions and how to put into practice the manifesto promise to give statutory recognition rights to unions that have the support of "51 per cent of the relevant workforce". It's well known that the meaning of that innocuous-sounding phrase is now a matter of direct dispute between the TUC, who argue that it means 51 per cent of those voting in any ballot, and the CBI, who insist that it means 51 per cent of those eligible to vote. This sets a very high hurdle. There are modernisers within the Government who sympathise quite strongly with the CBI view, who worry about the risk to inward investment of too effective a measure on union recognition, who might not be too unhappy about a public break with the TUC and who believe, bluntly, that union organisation is the unions' business, not the government's. There are also those, including some quite prominent cabinet members, who believe that the CBI demand is unreasonable and that the White Paper this spring will have to find a compromise. It's likely for example, that David Blunkett, who played some part in the drafting of the manifesto wording, would prefer a minimum level of turnout in a recognition ballot – say 30 per cent. As it happens, Rupert Murdoch's desire – entirely matched by that of his rivals – not to see the old print unions return to the newspaper industry hasn't been mentioned in the internal discussions so far about the issue. And it is much less relevant than many in the party think. But there are Labour MPs who persist in believing it is upmost in some ministers' minds. It will probably take weeks rather than days for the discussions to reach a conclusion.

The second is the issue of privacy and the press. This is of obsessive interest to other newspaper groups beside Mr Murdoch's and arises because the Human Rights Bill which goes to the Commons on Monday, incorporates, among the other articles of the European Convention of Human Rights, a right to privacy as well as a balancing right to free expression. Fearing that the Press Complaints Commission as a public authority could now be judged by the British courts not to be adequately protective of citizens against the intrusion of the press, the PCC's chairman is

now seeking its exemption from the terms of the Bill. In particular he wishes to guard against judgments which rule that the PCC should have restrained newspapers in advance from publication. Last Monday at a meeting between the Prime Minister, Lord Irvine (the justly proud author of the Bill in its present form), Jack Straw and Chris Smith, it was agreed that Charles Falconer, the Solicitor General, should apply his forensic mind to examine ways of amending the Bill to accommodate some of the PCC's concerns. This will not abolish the right to privacy in the Bill, and it will not preclude the possibility of future privacy legislation. But it will still look to the Government's critics like tampering with the Bill in order to satisfy the owners of tabloid newspapers.

The last, of course, is predatory pricing. And here Mr Murdoch, and the cut-price *Times*, is indisputably the protagonist. This week's decision by the Lords to amend the Competition Bill to outlaw the use of below cost pricing to hurt competitors, including *The Independent*, was a considerable embarrassment to the Government. The standard reaction to a Lords defeat, namely that it demonstrates the need to reform the Upper House, was simply not available. It was Labour life peers who rebelled, and Liberal Democrats, as a matter of policy, who led the charge against the government, and presumably would have done whatever the composition of the House. It also frankly strains credulity to say, as one junior member of the Government unblinkingly told me this week, that the Labour rebellion consisted of luvvies and trendy middle-class intellectuals. It's true that two new Labour working peers, Lord (Richard) Rodgers and Lord Putnam, just about fall into that category. But Lord (Jack) Ashley? or that redoubtable Brummie Lord (Dennis) Howell? Clever men, yes. Middle-class intellectuals? Hardly. Again there are strong feelings within the Labour Party in the Commons. The former Director General of the Office of Fair Trading Lord Borrie, Mirror Group Newspapers Director, and Labour peer is convinced that just as the Fair Trading Act contained special provisions for newspaper mergers because of the need for diversity, so should the Competition Bill provisions on predatory pricing. The Labour MP Chris Mullin is thinking of joining his colleague Giles Radice (both are highly influential MPs) in backing the Lords amendment with a similar one in the Commons, though he will probably not finally decide whether to do so until he has fully examined the Government's case.

There are possible compromises of varying effectiveness in all three cases. On privacy, if the Government does produce the exemption that the PCC – unnecessarily in the view of some lawyers – is seeking, it will surely (at long last) have to come up with a system of compensation for individuals who have been wronged by newspapers invading their privacy. On predatory pricing, the Government is quite likely to reword the Bill, though that does not necessarily mean the full scale enquiry into the predatory pricing Mr Murdoch's critics most want. On unions the participation threshold – though one probably significantly higher than 30 per cent – offers a possible compromise. The eventual outcome will probably not dramatically or immediately affect the level of union recognition in industry. It will probably not satisfy either the CBI or the TUC. But there is a good chance that it will also not lead to a full-scale confrontation with either. Some habits die hard. Like it or not, of all three issues, it is union recognition that in the long run will matter most in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Oswald, Enoch and David – Britain demands more than charisma



DAVID
AARONOVITCH
DIFFERENT CAREERS,
SIMILAR LESSONS

In March 1925, a crack unit of the British Fascists – a forerunner to the British Union of Fascists – kidnapped the Communist leader, Harry Pollitt. On the coterminous Mussolini was consolidating his hold on power, and Hitler was being released from prison where he had completed *Mein Kampf*. So Mr Pollitt might have expected the worst – to share the recent violent fate of the Italian socialist, Matteotti. Instead, according to the historian Roger Eatwell, he was released by the embarrassed fascists, who told the judge at their subsequent trial that he had accepted £5 by way of compensation for his inconvenience. Britain was, somehow, different.

This difference really struck home this week, when a coincidence of events led me to think about charismatic political leaders in this country. First, last Sunday, Enoch Powell died. Immediately tributes in many newspapers testified to the unique qualities of an exceptional man.

Then, today, the *New Statesman* publishes an interview with Dr David Owen, in which he says that he might return to active politics because, "it is hard to stand aside on such an issue as the single currency, when I believe that what is at stake is the whole history of this country". Excited Eurosceptics (often the same people as those posthumously praising old Enoch) have instantly begun to talk about Owen leading the anti-Euro crusade.

And finally, last night saw the first part of Laurence Marks' and Maurice Gran's enjoyable TV bio-drama of Sir Oswald Mosley ("Leader, Fascist, Adulterer" as the blurb put it). So in one week three great lost leaders made demands once more upon our attention. All three were once held in the kind of regard by some of their contemporaries that most politicians never experience. All three were said to possess rare intellectual gifts, to be prophets standing above party and beyond compromise, to be in direct contact with the soul of the nation. And, in Powell's words, to be odd men out.

Mosley was a stirring orator and possessed – as the Marks and Gran films make clear – a combination of bril-

liance and the attention span of a gnat. He was essentially a moderniser, arguing through the inter-war recessions for New Deal Keynesianism. His impatience with Labour's impossible gradualism, and his gigantic ego, led him – via byways – to the fashionable creed of Fascism, with its impressive colours and cult of absolute leaders. His anti-Semitism was not much more than a populist accretion, though that was of little comfort to the Jewish population of Britain.

Powell was no fascist, of course. He too was a moderniser, a man whose intellect had led him to embrace a free market philosophy and to reject the agreed statism that was a feature of the post-war consensus. Like Mosley, he was a beacon to younger, technocratic politicians, impatient with the status quo. He himself had, by 1968, resigned from the Cabinet once, and refused to serve in a shadow cabinet under Alec Douglas-Home.

And, also like Mosley (but in greater contradiction to his free market views) he adopted the language of race and nation when it suited him to do so. It was not – as his apologist wish to claim – cold logic or unwavering commitment



Adulation by the few is not enough: Sir Oswald Mosley inspects his troops, 1934

played the game," he later said, somewhat disingenuously. In 1974 he urged a Labour vote over the EEC, and subsequently became a Uist Unionist MP.

Owen's history is more familiar and more recent. He was another future Prime Minister, another impatient, handsome technocrat, this

they failed, all three turned to some form of sectionalism, to ancient nationalism and – in the case of Powell and Mosley, to racism. It is interesting to note that what is at stake for Owen is "the whole history of this country", not its whole future. And yet, for all their qualities and capacity to stir the blood, they have all been

pious of those who refuse to play the party game. The anti-Bonapartist streak in British political life – the same streak that made England so relieved to see the back of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell – penalises the man or woman without a party. Mosley's failure was partly due to the suspicious among right-wing Tories about him personally and about his infinite capacity for disloyalty. Powell was never forgiven by the Conservative party for his lack of collegiate discipline – and could never construct a powerbase outside it. David Owen's inability to stay in any political party that was imperfect cost him the highest office.

In one of the Mosley films Marks and Gran have a Tory friend of Mosley, the MP Bob Boothby, warn the future fascist leader that Britain "is an old country". So it is. It is a country where racial intolerance is not really respectable, where leadership is always constrained, where a single currency is not an issue of life or death, and where fascists give their opponents £5 to cover inconvenience.

'Mosley: leader, fascist, adulterer', Thursdays, Channel 4, 9pm.

All three men were said to possess rare intellectual gifts, to be prophets standing above party and beyond compromise, to be in direct contact with the soul of the nation

to the truth that led to the Rivers of Blood speech 30 years ago. When he used the language of invasion and terror, repeated urban myths about little old white ladies being terrorised by excreta through the letterbox and by "grinning picaninies", he knew that he was acting – in his own words – as a "lightning conductor", and he expected to benefit from that. A few weeks later the tabloid columnist, Jean Rook ("The First Lady of Fleet Street") appeared on *Any Questions* and told an applauding audience that she would loathe to live next door to a black man.

Paradoxically it was the end of Powell's career. The Tories shunned him. "I never

time of the centre. The failure of various parties to comprehend his message – and to act upon it – took him through Labour, into the Mark 1 SDP, and when that merged with the Liberals into the Mark 2 SDP, which then folded. And now he may be contemplating a return to battle, with further European integration as the *casus belli*.

The similarities really are striking, even if one should be careful to note the differences – there has ever been a suggestion that David Owen is anything other than a committed anti-racist. All three men were frustrated modernisers, questioning for some way of achieving the power to realise their objectives. As

failures. There was no Powellite movement after 1968, no Fascist MPs elected in the Thirties, no successful Owenite organisation.

At best two of them have acted as reluctant John the Baptists to politicians who assiduously played and won the party game – Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair. And it says something interesting about this country that this should be so. For all the talk about our disillusionment with party politicians, we are far more sus-

How can we learn what's in the food we're about to eat?



FRAN
ABRAMS
MANIPULATED
SOYA BEANS

When you get five minutes, why not take a look through your kitchen cupboards? Like most discerning consumers, you probably think you make positive choices about what you eat. But do you know that within a couple of years most of the processed food you buy will contain genetically modified soya designed to survive spraying with weedkiller?

There are major changes taking place in the way our food is produced. British shoppers have indicated they are suspicious of them. Ministers have expressed similar doubts. Just this week they blocked the planting of these crops in Britain and also declared their

soya goes into 60 per cent of the processed food we eat. Soya flour is used to leaven bread, pizza bases, pastry crusts, biscuits and noodles. Soya oil is used in cooking oil, margarine and spreads. And a third substance, soya lecithin, is used as an emulsifier or stabiliser, and to improve "mouth feel" in products such as mayonnaise and even chocolate.

Although it is just one of a number of modified crops now being developed, soya is the farthest forward. Within the next few years, we will also see modified maize, sugar beet and oilseed rape, among others, produced mainly by half a dozen big biotechnology companies.

Ask Joe Public whether he wants to eat genetically modified food, and the answer will usually be "No", as a number of surveys have shown. But this story is not about what the public wants. It's about what the public is about to get.

Let us look at how modified soya has come to be developed. Monsanto, an agro-chemical company based in St Louis, sells a highly successful glyphosate-based weedkiller called Roundup, whose US patent runs out in the year 2000. But Monsanto must now be confident that its product will be sold to sell. Why? Because it has developed a modified

soya yields by 7 per cent if they spray with Roundup. Forty per cent of the world's soya is grown in America, including the vast majority of what Britain imports.

But how can Monsanto be sure that farmers won't just buy the beans and spray them with a cheaper imitation brand? This is where it gets clever. Monsanto licenses its technology to seed producers, who then sell on to farmers. Farmers pay a small fee for the use of the seed and also sign an agreement that says they must spray their crops with branded Roundup. By the time the patent runs out, the British Retail Consortium estimates that 90 per cent of the US crop could be treated in this way. Brilliant.

The men from Monsanto say this is not their motivation. To quote Colin Merritt, the company's UK Technical Manager: "We are moving into a business which is based on seed rather than purely based on chemicals. Many of our other developments are entirely different with just seed and no chemical involved." This new technology actually reduces the amount of chemicals sprayed on crops, Mr Merritt explains. And it is approved by the American Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the European Union and the British government.

So where's the beef? Why are the environmentalists making such a big fuss?

Despite the regulatory system's approval, there are some very knowledgeable people who feel we do not yet know enough about the possible health risks involved in a range of modified crops. For example Professor Philip James, author of the proposals for the Government's Food Standards Agency and Director of the Rowett Research Institute at the University of Aberdeen, said on a Scottish BBC documentary this month: "The perception that everything is totally straightforward and safe is totally naive." He added: "Once the BSE problem is solved, if it is solved, then I think that the big public concern is going to be about the huge array of genetic manipulations... and how we tackle that in a proper, responsible way."

And while the FDA is renowned for its tough attitude, it does sometimes approve foods that remain banned in the UK. Crisps made with Olestra, a fat substitute which passes straight through the body but which, it is claimed, can strip the body of essential nutrients and cause stomach cramps or diarrhoea, are on sale in the US but not here.

As yet, there is no clear evidence to suggest genetically modified food is generally dangerous to human health. But, as the Consumers' Association argues, the effects will be hard to discern when we are all eat-

ing the stuff. Jeff Rooker, the Agriculture Minister, says that if the Government had been elected a year or 18 months earlier it might have demanded segregation of these crops. Now he must hope that government research will show there are no potential health problems.

"If they don't come up with something I for one will not be prepared to give robust answers about it all being safe for ever more," he says.

Then there is the question of environmental impact. What if the beans cross-pollinate with wild plants – possibly wild soya – to create indestructible weeds? Monsanto says its gene cannot transfer in this way, but environmentalists have their doubts.

The battle to bring genetically modified soya to Britain now centres on a PR war, pitting the resources of Monsanto against such organisations as the Consumers' Association, Greenpeace and a group called Wholefoods against Genetix Foods. Monsanto employs a PR firm, Lowe Bell, but you will rarely see the company's name on any publicity material. Its representative can be found in the 1997 phone book under Soya Bean Information Centre. If you phone this centre, you will find its name is now the Plant Biotech Information Centre. And it is based at 59 Russell Square, London: the

address of Lowe Bell. Alternatively, the switchboard at Monsanto's headquarters in High Wycombe will put you through there.

Or you might like to get some information from the Food and Drinks Federation's "Food for Our Future" campaign, to which Monsanto says it gives financial support, although the FDF denies this.

What if you still don't like the idea of genetically modified food? This is an issue about consumers' rights, but consumers can only exercise their right to choose what they buy if they are fully informed. And even though the supermarkets plan to label products which contain soya as having genetically modified material in them, they will do so only at the bottom of a list of ingredients, and only when they redesign their packaging.

If ministers are really concerned about this issue, as they say they are, why not insist on tobacco style "health warnings," prominently placed and in large letters? They could say: "Warning: No one really knows what genetically modified food can do to your health."

Then shoppers could make up their own minds about what they want to eat. If Monsanto has won its PR battle for their hearts and minds, we will buy the products regardless. But if it has not, sooner or later they will disappear from our shelves.

OFFER CLOSING 17TH FEB

EVEREST

JANUARY

SALE

EXTENDED

30% OFF

Call Free 0800 010123

Please Quote Ref: FEB93

* Off list price. Minimum order value £725. Offer open only on time of quotation. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer. Different discounts apply to conservatories. Everest, Everest House, FREEPOST, Cuffley, Herts EN4 6YA.

Everest
FIT THE BEST

LCR chiefs to collect £600,000 as taxpayer faces £800m bill

By Michael Harrison

Directors of London & Continental Railways, the failed Channel rail link consortium, are set to collect pay-offs totalling £600,000 while taxpayers face a bill of up to £800m to cover its liabilities. It emerged last night.

The four executive directors, led by chairman Sir Derek Hornby and chief executive Adam Mills, are all on one-year contracts and an LCR spokesman confirmed these would be honoured if the consortium was put into liquidation.

Meanwhile, it became clear that LCR's liabilities, which will revert back to the Government should the consortium be wound up, are far higher than initial estimates.

In addition to taking on LCR's £430m of bank debt, which includes £140m representing the money spent on preparatory and engineering work on the 68-mile link, the taxpayer would also inherit the consortium's leasing liabilities on its fleet of Eurostar trains. These are understood to total around £275m. Further liabilities relating to work carried out and contracts entered into bring the total to nearly £800m.

In contrast, the liabilities of LCR's eight shareholders, which include Richard Bran-



Adam Mills: Thought to have been paid £200,000

son's Virgin Group, Europe's biggest bank SBC Warburg Dillon Read and Bechtel, America's second highest construction company, are restricted to the £100m of equity they put in.

An LCR spokesman said yesterday that there was no question of the consortium shouldering any liabilities beyond those it was contractually obliged to accept under the agreement drawn up with Sir George Young, the then Transport Secretary, in 1996.

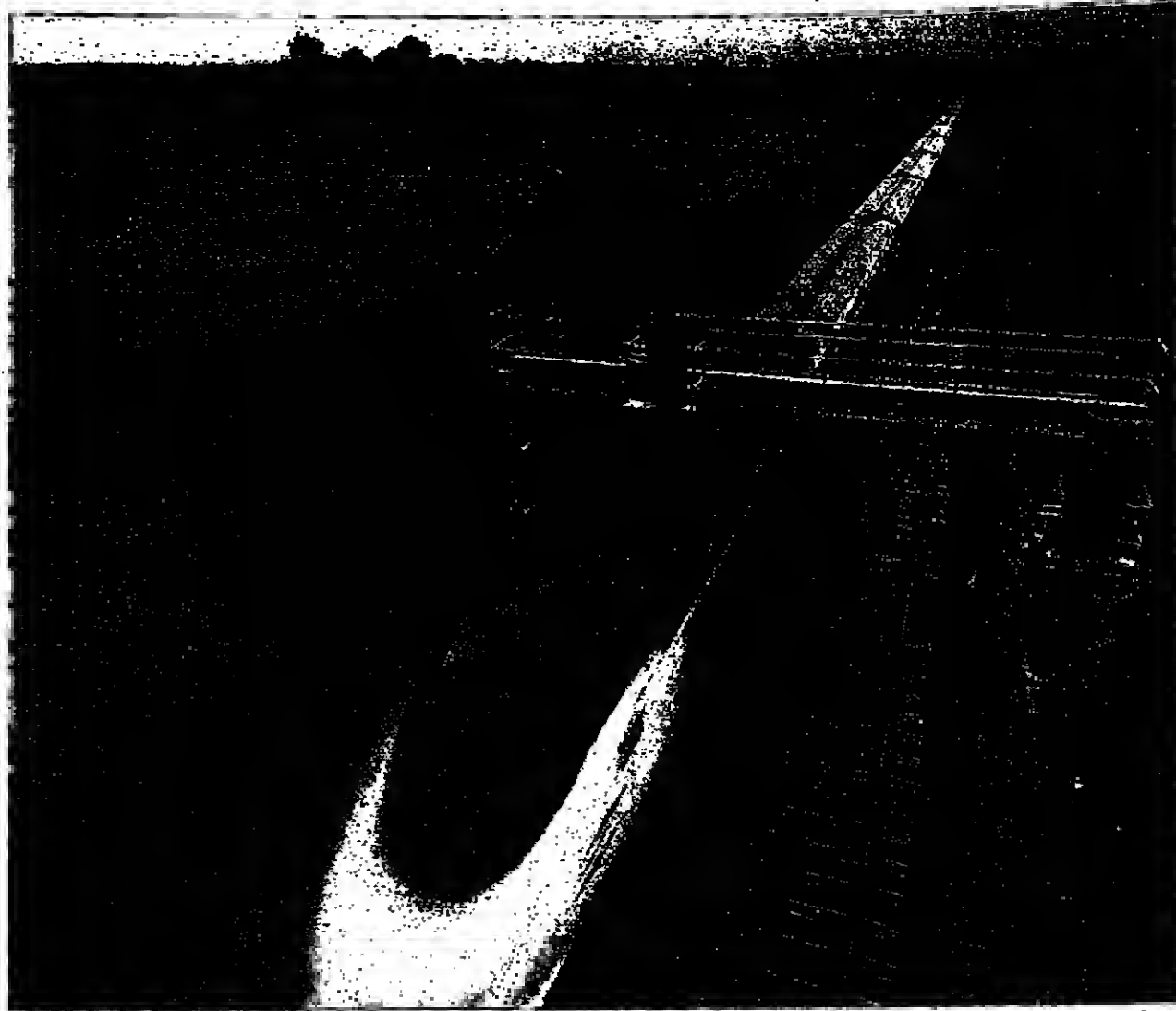
"These arrangements were not widely publicised at the time but one can only assume the government of the day felt this was the correct way to get the deal done," he added.

Senior ministers have grown increasingly alarmed at the extent of the liabilities faced by taxpayers and view LCR's directors with barely disguised contempt.

LCR retorts that had Eurostar and the rail link project remained within the public sector, then taxpayers would be far worse off than they are now. "At least the taxpayer has been spared the £100m we invested in the project. There is no appetite among shareholders to shoulder five times that amount," said one senior member of the consortium.

Mr Mills is thought to have been paid around £200,000 last year and Sir Derek about £100,000, not including pension entitlements. The other two executives, finance director Robert Holden and Union Rail managing director John Neerhout, are thought to have received around £160,000 and £100,000 respectively. The spokesman said they were fully entitled to compensation for loss of office under their service contracts.

The £100m of equity capital put up by the shareholders will be mainly used to run down the company and ensure a solvent liquidation. LCR's own liabilities consist mainly of creditors, including staff, property obligations and responsi-



Taxpayers may inherit the consortium's leasing liabilities on its fleet of Eurostar trains, understood to be around £275m

bility for some continuing Eurostar losses.

LCR employs about 30 staff at its corporate headquarters while Union Railways, the subsidiary responsible for managing the high-speed rail link, employs a further 150. LCR also has a contractual relationship with Rail Link Engineering, a joint venture made up of four LCR shareholders

which is designing the link and which employs 950 people.

The rolling stock lease liabilities on Eurostar's seven trains are in the region of £175m. Eurostar has a further £100m of leasing liabilities through its 61 per cent stake in Nightstock, a joint venture with the German, French and Dutch railways.

Meanwhile, Railtrack, one of the leading contenders to

take over the project, confirmed after a board meeting last night that it would give "serious consideration to any sensible proposal" on condition it served the interests of shareholders and did not compromise its existing investment programme.

Railtrack's preferred option is a cut-price scheme that would cost perhaps a third of

the £5.4bn LCR would have needed. Under this option, Railtrack would build the high-speed link only as far as Southfleet in Kent and then continue the route on existing track into Waterloo International. This would save the costs of tunnelling under central London and constructing a new terminus at St Pancras.

Outlook, page 23

Shake-up in cables industry to cost 870 jobs

By Andrew Yates

BICC and Delta yesterday announced a radical shake-up of their troubled cables operations which will lead to 870 job losses in the UK and a string of factory closures.

Sites in north London, Swansea, Derby and Wrexham will close as part of the huge restructuring operation which will see the two companies swap large parts of their cable businesses in an effort to stem plunging profits.

The deals leave BICC to concentrate on heavy duty cable for the power transmission industry, based at its factory in Wrexham.

Delta will be focused on cable for the construction industry at its existing plants in Llanelli and Derby.

The move has been prompted by the dramatic slump in the European cables market has been dogged by over capacity.

BICC has already been forced to announce mass redundancies in Italy and Germany as part of a wide scale rationalisation of the business. The company has axed more than 2,000 workers from its cable business over the last twelve months as part of a £45m cost-cutting programme.

Alan Jones, chief executive of BICC, insisted that this would be the last major restructuring of the group's cables business for some time.

"When I arrived at BICC there was a lot of tidying up to do and this is the end of that tidying up program. This makes our cables business much stronger," he said.

Joe Scott-Maxwell, chief executive of Delta, said: "Delta is participating in the long overdue rationalisation of the European cables industry. I believe our cable business now has a long term future, whether that is with us or with somebody else. Delta is likely to look to sell the business as soon as possible as part of its strategy to concentrate on its electrical and manganese divisions.

In a complicated swap of assets BICC will pay Delta £5m. It has also bought Delta's copper rod mill for £17.5m at Enfield which will be closed down, with production shifted to Mexborough.

The reorganisation will cost BICC £140m and Delta £49m in asset write-downs and redundancy costs. BICC plans to close Delta's power cables business in Enfield, north London, Swansea and Derby after acquiring them as part of the deal.

Delta's shares jumped 18p to 265p and BICC's shares rose 0.5p to 140p. "This looks like a good deal for both sides in a dire market," said one industry analyst.

Investment column, page 24

Hollick empire loses second senior executive

By Peter Thal Larsen and Nigel Cope

United News & Media, Lord Hollick's embattled media empire, yesterday parted company with its second senior executive in as many months who chief operating officer David Arculus announced that he was stepping down after just nine months in the job.

Mr Arculus is understood to be considering an offer to become chairman of IPC, the magazine group which was recently the subject of a management buyout by Civen, the venture capital group.

A spokesman for Civen refused to comment but said: "At some stage Civen will be looking to appoint a chairman of IPC, as with all its investee companies."

Mr Arculus, who helped build up magazine group Emap before he was lured to United, is believed to have quit after deciding it was not possible to work underneath Lord Hollick, United's hands-on chief executive, who has not taken as

active a role in the government as many expected him to.

"When David joined before the election everyone assumed that Hollick would spend more time advising the Government," said one industry source. "But Hollick is not that close to the leadership of the Labour Party."

"He may have thought that it would be his show," said another. "But Hollick seems to be there all the time."

Mr Arculus declined bluntly to comment on his departure.

"I'm not saying anything."

Mr Arculus's departure follows shortly after the news that Stephen Grabner, who runs United's regional and co-sponsor titles, would be leaving to take up the job of chief executive of British Digital Broadcasting (BDB), the television group.

News of Mr Arculus's departure pushed United's share price down 26p to 692p. But analysts said this was an over-reaction. "He hasn't been at United long enough to make a difference," said one.

Mr Arculus has a contract



David Arculus: Stepping down after nine months

which ends in April 1997. His pay has never been disclosed, but his annual salary is believed to be well above the £360,000 he received while at Emap. Some industry sources suggested his payoff could be as high as £1m, although a company spokesman said negotiations were still continuing.

The departure prompted some in the industry to suggest that Mr Arculus is difficult to work with. He left Emap after 25 years after a simmering rivalry for the top job with chief executive Richard Miller.

Outlook, page 23

Pennant-Rea consortium received £4m sweetener to buy bargain-priced HMSO

By Michael Harrison

A consortium led by the former deputy Governor of the Bank of England, Rupert Pennant-Rea, received a £4m sweetener to purchase the Stationery Office even though the final sale price was half the Government's target valuation, it emerged yesterday.

National Publishing Group, the company formed by Mr Pennant-Rea and the venture capitalists Electra Fleming, paid £54m for the Stationery Office in September 1996.

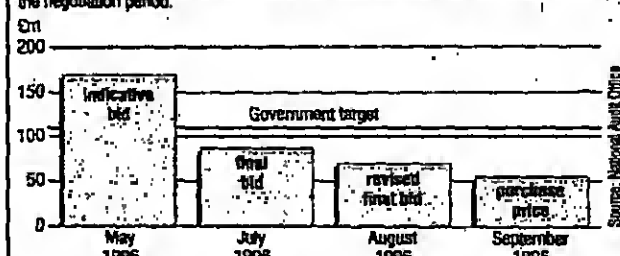
But a highly critical report on the sale published yesterday by the National Audit Office, the Government's financial watchdog, disclosed that National Publishing Group's initial indicative bid was £170m while the Government's advisers, Compers & Lybrand, put a "benchmark valuation" of £110m on the business.

The report revealed how the winning consortium whittled down its offer price over a four-month period as the deteriorating state of the Stationery Office's finances and business prospects became apparent.

It also disclosed that in the

Paper bids

Graph shows size of bids made by National Publishing Group for the HMSO during the negotiation period.



final few days before the business was sold, the Stationery Office was nearly bankrupted, suspending payments to suppliers because it was in danger of breaching its £50m statutory borrowing limit.

The Cabinet Office under the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Roger Freeman, therefore agreed to pay National Publishing the cash balances in the business at the point of sale which amounted to £3.8m.

The Cabinet Office justified the payment on the grounds that "Failure to compensate the purchaser in this way might well have led to a breakdown in the deal negotiations."

National Publishing subse-

quently told the NAO that the additional amounts owed to creditors exceeded the cash sweetener by £2m. Since the takeover, it has also axed 1,000 jobs from the workforce of 2,500 at a cost of £54m.

The Pennant-Rea consortium was one of 14 groups that submitted initial indicative bids in May 1996. Its offer, at a price range of £150m to £170m was £9m more than the next highest bid from Hambros.

By the time it submitted its final bid in July, the price had been cut to £60m. In August it cut the offer price to £59m, citing risks associated with taking on the businesses and other additional costs. In September it re-

duced its offer for a final time to £54m because of delays in finalising completion accounts.

The NAO report is severely critical of the way the Stationery Office was run in the build-up to the sale, accusing it of "poor financial and management control", producing over-optimistic turnover and profit forecasts and having a badly-executed restructuring programme.

Although the original plan had been to float the business in 1997, the NAO said that the decision to bring forward the sale had no impact. "We found no evidence to suggest that a delay in the sale to improve the profitability of the business would have produced better value for money."

The costs of the sale to the taxpayer were £2.2m - equal to 4 per cent of the proceeds.

Last night, Mr Pennant-Rea said the NAO report confirmed that the taxpayer had received value for money. "Given the failure of state ownership to restructure the business, the disciplines of the private sector were essential to secure the long-term health of the business."

BT abandons television broadcasting hopes

By Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

British Telecom has abandoned hopes of offering mainstream television channels down its telephone wires, in favour of a drive to improve Internet services for home computers.

The decision, confirmed yesterday by Sir Peter Bonfield,

BT's chief executive, came as the company revealed a 12 per cent rise in profits between October and December, to £1.02bn.

Sir Peter gave the clearest signal yet that BT is no longer interested in using its network to offer entertainment programmes, despite the long-running campaign to end the Government's broadcasting

ban. The Department of Trade and Industry looks set to announce the lifting of the ban in 2000, a year earlier under the previous government's policy.

"It is extremely unlikely we'll be squinting television channels down our wires," said Sir Peter, adding that the technology had moved on since BT had talked of investing £150m to bring fibre-optic cable to

every home in the country. BT will shortly begin two home trials offering much faster Internet access through its existing copper local network.

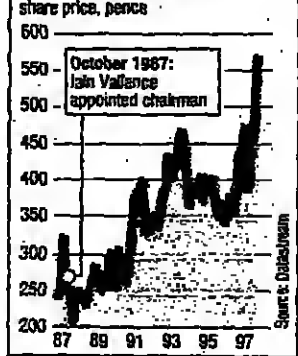
Sir Peter said talks were continuing with several US operators, but he said there were "no discussions" underway with Cable & Wireless. He hinted that BT would ask shareholders for the power to

make share buybacks at the annual meeting in July, but insisted no decisions had been taken.

The company's residential customer base grew by 10,000 lines in the last quarter, despite growing competition from cable companies. Losses from the company's expanding European operations were running at £200m a year.

British Telecom

share price, pence



Vallance goes part-time at BT

Sir Iain Vallance is to relinquish his role as executive chairman of British Telecom from August, moving to a part time position with the company after more than 10 years at the helm.

BT said Sir Iain would stay on as non-executive chairman until his contract expires in 2000, but that he would also explore outside interests. He is vice chairman of Royal Bank of Scotland and a board member

of Mobil. Sir Iain, who is 55, will receive an annual pension of £281,000, along with a reduced salary, without bonuses, which has yet to be decided by BT's pay committee. In the year to last April he was paid a basic salary of £185,000, plus an annual bonus of £185,000. However Sir Iain has for several years paid his cash bonuses to The Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

STOCK MARKETS

Index	Close	Change	Change (%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5552.50	-55.40	-0.99	5679.10	4188.10	3.27
FTSE 250	4983.90	-7.80	-0.15	4998.90	4384.20	3.20
FTSE 350	2851.50	-22.40	-0.84	2856.20	2075.70	3.25
FTSE All Share	2854.61	-20.34	-0.76	2852.63	2058.07	3.24
FTSE SmallCap	2425.10	1.20	0.05	2428.20	2182.10	3.80
FTSE AIM	999.90	0.70	0.07	1348.50	122.20	3.43
Dow Jones	8254.01	-60.79	-0.73	8320.09	6356.78	1.88
Nikkei	17174.93	-30.18	-0.18	20810.79	14488.21	0.90
Hang Seng	10620.03	-173.38	-1.61	16820.31	7908.13	3.70
Dax	4536.80	-51.60	-1.13	4597.29	3171.05	1.76

INTEREST RATES

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	1 yr 6m	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
UK 10 year gilt	7.50	1.19	7.45	0.70	5.95	-1.15	5.24	-1.32
US 10 year bond	5.63	0.12	5.68	-0.13	5.46	-0.92	5.83	-0.88
Japan 10 year	0.84	0.34	0.81	0.23	1.98	-0.58	2.80	-0.56
Germany 10 year	3.51	0.35	3.78	0.57	4.99	-0.58	5.55	-0.34

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	1 yr 6m	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
UK 10 year gilt	7.50	1.19	7.45	0.70	5.95	-1.15	5.24	-1.32
US 10 year bond	5.63	0.12	5.68	-0.13	5.46	-0.92	5.83	-0.88
Japan 10 year	0.84	0.34	0.81	0.23	1.98	-0.58	2.80	-0.56
Germany 10 year	3.51	0.35	3.78	0.57	4.99	-0.58	5.55	-0.34

CURRENCIES

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	1 yr 6m	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
UK 10 year gilt	7.50	1.19	7.45	0.70	5.95	-1.15	5.24	-1.32
US 10 year bond	5.63	0.12	5.68	-0.13	5.46	-0.92	5.83	-0.88
Japan 10 year	0.84	0.34	0.81	0.23	1.98	-0.58	2.80	-0.56
Germany 10 year	3.51	0.35	3.78	0.57	4.99	-0.58	5.55	-0.34

TOURIST RATES

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	1 yr 6m	2 yr	3 yr	5 yr	10 yr
UK 10 year gilt	7.50	1.19	7.45	0.70	5.95	-1.15	5.24	-1.32
US 10 year bond	5.63	0.12	5.68	-0.13	5.46	-0.92	5.83	-0.88
Japan 10 year	0.84	0.34	0.81	0.23	1.98	-0.58	2.80	-0.56
Germany 10 year	3.51	0.35	3.78	0.57	4.99	-0.58	5.55	-0.34



OUTLOOK ON FALLOUT FROM LCR CRISIS, DAVID ARCULUS' RESIGNATION, AND A THUMBS DOWN TO THE INDONESIAN CURRENCY BOARD.

When the bicycling baronet, Sir George Young, awarded London & Continental Railways the Channel rail link concession in 1996, it must have completely slipped his mind that the whole idea behind such projects was to transfer risk from the public to the private sector.

With the consortium about to go belly up and Eurostar ripe for renationalisation it transpires that, far from picking up the tab, LCR's well-heeled shareholders look like passing £800m of liabilities back to the taxpayer.

At the very worst, the eight shareholders (SBC, Waburg Dillon, Bechtel, National Express, Virgin, SNCF, London Electricity, Ove Arup and Sir William Halcrow and Partners) will end up shouldering losses of £100m. With balance sheets the size of SBC's such a sum is hardly likely to break the bank.

More importantly, this surely cannot have been the sort of risk-reward ratio that the Conservative government had in mind when it invented the Private Finance Initiative. When it came to the rail link, there was plenty of initiative on display, but sadly not much of it came from inside the Department of Transport.

Is LCR cootie? Not a bit of it. With breathtaking *chutzpah*, the consortium cheerfully suggests it has actually done the taxpayer a giant favour. Had it not come along two years ago and taken Eurostar and the rail link project off the Government's hands, then the losses being funded out of public money would be a lot higher today.

Given LCR's ability to get a two-year traffic forecast wrong by a margin of 150 per cent, some people might be inclined

to take such assertions with a pinch of salt. Certainly John Prescott is unimpressed. LCR has pulled off the financial equivalent of what Chumbawamba achieved with an ice bucket.

At the very least, the LCR *débâcle* demands that the Treasury examine all the other PFI projects so far let to see whether the playing field is tilted in a similar direction. LCR's shareholders are contractually within their rights to pass the buck to the taxpayer. But equally, governments have all manner of things in their gift – such as airport slots, rail subsidies, public sector contracts and mandates for investment banking advice. Revenge, Mr Prescott may reflect, is a dish best served cold.

It's been a pleasure working for you ...

A letter from David Arculus, who resigned abruptly as chief operating officer at United News and Media yesterday, to an old chum at the top international head-bunting firm of Lewis, Brager and Rathbone, appears bizarrely to have been misdirected and as a consequence has turned up in the *Independent's* postbag. In the interests of transparency, we were reproduce it. "Dear Sir D... [name withheld to protect confidentiality],

"As I write, my name is being put to one of those ridiculous sweetness and light press releases announcing that I'm on my bike after just nine months in the job but with no hard feelings. I'm quoted as saying it

has been a real pleasure working for United while Lord Stevens, who hasn't spoken to me for months, says what an important contribution I've made to the company. Hal As you can imagine, my comments are through clenched teeth, arm twisted behind back and a grinning lawyer waving my contract before me.

"Actually it's been one of the most frustrating nine months of my life, much worse than my long-running feud while at Emap with Richard Miller. At least that was good fun and the company was going places. I think the problem was that at United I was brought in under false pretences. I was led to believe that Lord Hollick would be taking an increasingly back-seat role, that he would be spending large amounts of his time with his new Labour cronies, advising Margaret Beckett on competition policy and the like.

"Not a bit of it. In recent months, the Frenchman has been more hands on than ever. When I tried to shoe horn my way onto the television side of the group, they said I knew F-all about it and shut me out. It wasn't much better with the newspapers, which also had their own boss, Steven Grabiner. I suppose you've had a hand here, for he's about to depart for pastures new as well. If you recall, he was the man responsible for such triumphs of newspaper marketing as the £1-a-week *Telegraph*, but even so I couldn't get a look in.

"Round at Emap they seem to believe I was planning some kind of triumphant return by launching a United News and Media bid for the company. I have to say that even if I'd wanted to, I'd never have got it

through the bearded baron. He wouldn't let me bid for IPC and he wouldn't even let me acquire the *Autostar* magazine group. What I'm saying here is that for heaven's sake next time get me a job where I'm the undisputed boss, and not somebody else's lackey. By the way, I've already had several offers (who knows, I might even end up at IPC after all), so if you want your commission you'd better get a move on.

Yours in anticipation, David."

Currency board lacks credibility

Robert Rubin, the US Treasury secretary, has given the thumbs down to Indonesia's plan to introduce a currency board. As he put it delicately in evidence to Congress, there were "a lot of issues" about whether the country would have enough credibility in the financial markets to be able to adhere to it. As he spoke, the rupiah was again in free fall, plunging 9 per cent as investors fretted about President Suharto's financial reforms – or lack of them – and growing political unrest.

Currency boards can sometimes work very effectively. The basic idea is that the board replaces the central bank, issuing domestic currency only when it is backed by a fixed exchange rate by a foreign currency such as the US dollar. If anybody in the private sector exports goods or brings in overseas investment they sell their dollars to the currency board in return for local currency, and vice versa. Local money supply can only increase if the country's foreign reserves in-

crease. The effect is to prevent all political meddling in the domestic economy, which becomes wholly controlled by the markets.

Currency boards have a long history, the first being set up in Mauritius in 1949. From there they spread throughout the British colonies. Gibraltar and the Falklands still have one. Hong Kong revived its own version in 1983 after a currency crisis triggered by doubts about the handover, and Argentina introduced one in 1991 after a severe hyperinflation.

These two are generally deemed to have worked well, sustaining confidence and keeping inflation low. So why are there doubts about Indonesia's proposal? One obvious concern is that the fluctuations in interest rates that can result from a currency board require either a very strong banking system, which Indonesia does not have, or a genuine willingness to let banks fail. Even if the regime has such will, it is not clear that a swift and brutal round of failures is the best approach in a tottering economy.

But the real catch is that a currency board can not substitute for credibility in the broader sense. There are suspicions that President Suharto wants the board so that an exchange rate of around 5,000 rupiah to the dollar can be set. That would help his family-owned companies meet their foreign debts. A rate of 8,000, which would be more in the wider interests of the country, could prove financially ruinous to Mr Suharto. Currency boards are often a highly effective mechanism for restoring international confidence in an economy, but they cannot be expected to work for the greater good when operated by essentially corrupt and nepotistic regimes. The IMF should have no truck with Mr Suharto's plans.

Transco warns over pace of gas competition

By Chris Godsmark

More than 1 million homes have so far switched from British Gas to new suppliers as the domestic market moves to towards full competition, the gas watchdog Ofgas revealed yesterday.

But as Ofgas released the figures, Transco, the pipeline network, warned of "critical" risks to Ofgas's accelerated timetable to complete the roll-out of domestic competition.

Clare Spottiswoode, the industry regulator, said the customers numbers were "an important milestone," with al-

most one in four homes abandoning British Gas in areas where competition has been introduced. The figures included 956,800 customers who had already switched to alternative independent gas companies, along with more than 40,000 others who were waiting for Transco to process the move.

The roll-out began with trials in South-west England in Spring 1996 and has spread to Avon, Dorset, Kent and Sussex. Around a further 2 million consumers in Scotland and the north-east of England were able to choose their gas supplier

last November. Ofgas said another 400,000 households had signed up with a new supplier in the next competitive area, which covers 2.8 million homes in Greater Manchester and North Yorkshire and goes live on 27 February.

However the headline statistics hide marked regional differences in the willingness of customers to abandon British Gas. In Scotland and the North-east, where just over 400,000 homes have switched from British Gas, rival suppliers were surprised by the slower than expected switch rate. Transco's in-

tensified warning about the pace of competition reflected Ofgas's decision to open the final two areas of the market over a 48 hour period. Choice will be extended to 3.1 million homes stretching from East Anglia to Hampshire on 22 May, with the final 3.2 million customers in Greater London and Surrey included on the following day.

There was originally a four week gap between the two regions in the previous timetable. Transco, which is building new computer systems to track customers, said there remained "a high probability that errors



Clare Spottiswoode:
Welcomes competition

will occur which will require immediate action to remedy". The pipeline operator said the roll-out was also critically dependent on new suppliers' ability to cope with demand.

Watmoughs finds white knight and shares soar in value

By Peter Thal Larsen

The battle for control of Watmoughs took a new twist yesterday as the printing group, which has been resisting a £183.3m hostile offer from Canadian rival Quebecor, announced that it was in talks with a potential white knight.

Shares in Watmoughs surged 46.5p to 320p as the company announced that it was in talks with an unnamed bidder which could make a cash offer of "substantially" more than 300p per share. Quebecor's offer stands at 257p.

The identity of the bidder remains a mystery. Analysts sug-

gested that American printers RR Donnelley & Sons and World Color were the most likely candidates. Roto Smeets de Boer, a Dutch firm, was also linked with Watmoughs but denied that it had made an offer.

Quebecor pointed out that its bid was still awaiting regulatory clearance and that it would "clarify its position" once the Office of Fair Trading and Department of Trade and Industry had ruled on the bid. Analysts have long argued that Quebecor would have to raise its bid in order to win approval. However, many thought that an offer around

290p a share would be enough to win the contest. Watmoughs' share price has traded above 257p – the level of Quebecor's offer – ever since the bid was first announced.

The arrival of a white knight surprised many observers. Watmoughs has consistently argued that it would be best placed to realise value for shareholders if it remained as an independent company.

But few shareholders believed that the management team was strong enough to replace chief executive Patrick Walker, who came back into the job from semi-retirement last year, when he steps down.

Spring time in Paris from £85

THE INDEPENDENT
INDEPENDENT

Spring is nearly here, and what better way to shake off the winter blues than a trip to Paris. Whether you want to shop, dine, night-club, go sightseeing or simply take your time and relax, Paris is the perfect destination. With our special Springtime in Paris offer, you can go for a fraction of the price you would normally pay. All things considered wouldn't you rather be in Paris.

To make your booking simply call Driveline direct on 01707 222400. The offer is valid for travel between 16th February and 30th April (excl 9-14 April)

THE OFFER

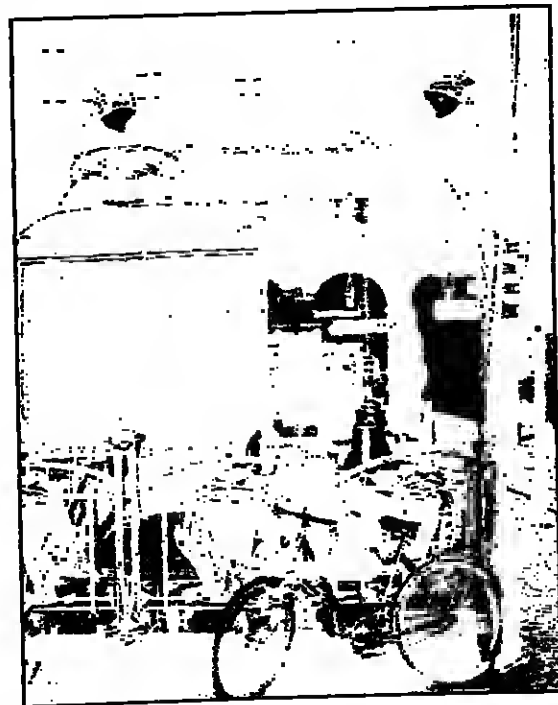
The price includes a return standard class Eurostar ticket from Looosoo Waterloo International (or Ashford International in Kent) to Paris Gare du Nord and one night sharing a twin/double room in one of five conveniently located hotels. For only £20 per person per night you can extend your stay to a two or three night break. Upgrade to a 3 star hotel from just £39 per person with extra nights from £27 per person per night.

Weekend travel: For travel outward and/or return travel on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday add £20 per person. For all travel in April add £15 per person. Child prices on request.

HOW TO BOOK

Phone Driveline on 01707 222 400 quoting The Independent Eurostar offer promotion. Please have ready your 1st and 2nd choice of departure/return times and hotel accommodation. We recommend that you include a late morning departure/early afternoon return as one of your choices.

Payment can be made by Switch, Delta, Connect, Access or Visa. Travel Insurance is available at a special price of £10pp. Bookings must be received by Driveline at least 5 working days in advance of the requested date of travel. Within this period, where Driveline is able to accommodate your request, a £10 late booking fee will apply. All bookings will be verified by confirmation invoice and tickets are normally issued seven days prior to departure. If your departure date is within seven days, Driveline Europe will contact you to make suitable arrangements. A binding contract between you and Driveline Europe Ltd will come into existence when you have verbally confirmed your payment



TIMES OF TRAVEL
Choose from the following departure times:
Ex London Waterloo International to Paris: 0608*, 0619*, 0723*, 1157, 1253*, 1357, 1523, 1623*, 1715, 1748, 1853*.
Ex Paris to London Waterloo International: 0637, 0716, 0813, 0910*, 1019, 1143, 1219, 1304, 1519, 1607*, 1710*, 1819, 1919*.
Fewer services run Sat/Sun. *stops at Ashford, parking at Ashford £5 per day.

ACCOMMODATION
Campanile Montparnasse**
Located on avenue du Maine and close to Galleries Lafayette

Campanile Bastille**
Located in the centre of Paris, close to the historic Marais Quarter

Campanile Italie-Gobelins**
Situated on the left bank at Place d'Italie with walking distance of the Latin Quarter.


Clarine Paris Alesia**
South of Montparnasse near Porte d'Orleans

Hotel Roi Rene**

Close to the Etoile and Parc Monceau

Hotel Peyrie***
Ideally located in the heart of the opera area
The TrianonRive Gauche***deluxe
Prime location next to the Jardin du Luxembourg (from £105 pp)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
All bookings are subject to availability. All travel must be completed by 30/04/98. The offer is available to readers aged 18 years or over. You will require a valid EC passport and any necessary visas. Tickets for Eurostar train services are issued subject to the conditions set out in Eurostar's Conditions of carriage, copies of which are available on request. Readers should be aware that no changes or amendments are permitted with this offer. Lost or stolen tickets are strictly non refundable. Departure/return times are approximate and subject to change. Eurostar check in closes 30 minutes before departure. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer. This offer is valid for a minimum of two adults sharing a room. Paris tourist tax is approx. 6.67 per day. At all times check your tickets and accommodation vouchers carefully. In accordance with the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours regulation (1992), Driveline Europe Ltd operate a Clients' Trustee account whereby all moneys paid to them by clients will be held in a separate bank account until the contract has been fully performed i.e. the return date as confirmed by Driveline has passed.



Faxminder

Think of it as voicemail for faxes.

Faxminder is like a homing device for faxes. A single number is assigned to you, not to any particular fax machine. Then, wherever you are in the world – day or night – any fax sent to that number will be stored for you.

And when you're ready to read them, you just go to the nearest fax machine and key in your number. It's confidential, because you're the only one who can

retrieve your faxes. It's never engaged. And because you only collect them at the precise moment you want them, delivery is assured.

Quite simply, wherever you can find a fax machine, your faxes can find you.

Freefone 0800 800855
for a
free two month trial.
www.faxminder.co.uk

FREE USE TERMS: The connection fee of £23.50 inc. VAT and the first two month rental are free. This special offer is valid on subscriptions from 30/01/98 to 20/04/98. Monthly rental after the trial period is £5.85 inc. VAT. Calls to Faxminder may not be available from a small number of other networks both in the UK and overseas and some private switchboards. Calls to Faxminder are charged at BT's 'n' rate. Calls to Faxminder from non-BT land lines and from mobile phones will be charged at the appropriate rates levied by the network operator. Calls to your Faxminder number are charged at Local rate within the UK. There are additional charges for international use and for receiving faxes abroad. You must inform us 7 days prior to the end of the trial period if you wish to stop using Faxminder. If you do not, monthly rental will become automatically payable from month 3. For quality control purposes, we may from time to time randomly call calls.

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

Brokers may be bargain buy

Britain's insurance broking sector has been a dire performer in recent years. Since 1993, it has underperformed the market by almost 60 per cent due to falling commissions and intense competition. Willis Corroon and Sedgwick, the only two brokers of any size left in the UK, have borne the brunt of the industry turmoil. The sector has increasingly suffered from a growing trend among multinational corporations to cut out the middle man.

Many companies have now grown to such a size that using an insurance company to cover a business risk is becoming increasingly impractical. They are instead setting up their own, captive insurance companies to cover day-to-day risks.

Bigger risks such as earthquakes or floods are still put out to reinsurers. But more often than not, companies are bypassing brokers to deal with the handful of reinsurers who take on these kind of risks.

This logic has taken a particularly strong hold in the US, where brokers such as Willis Corroon derive half their income. The trend has led to downward pressure on premium rates, reducing commission income for brokers. That has inevitably led to the consolidation of the industry. One by one, the brokers have been eliminated. Now there are just four: the two British firms and their giant US rivals, Marsh & McLennan and Aon.

That consolidation seems to have paused for now. John Reeve, Willis Corroon's executive chairman, has stubbornly resisted pressure to merge with Sedgwick, and hostile takeovers are difficult in what is seen as a people business.

Against this turbulent background yesterday's full year results from Willis pleased the market, with profits coming in comfortably ahead of expectations at £95.5m (£91.6m).

Willis has chosen a different course to Sedgwick, which has looked to win more fees rather than commission-based work, as evidenced by its acquisition of Noble Lowndes. Instead it has been able to increase commissions by using a system whereby the insurer agrees to pay higher commission in return for receiving a greater volume of profitable business.

Willis has also managed to boost US business with companies over there looking to spread business amongst the brokers still left in the business.

Analysts have pencilled in earnings of £105m for the current year, putting the shares on a prospective P/E ratio of 9. The

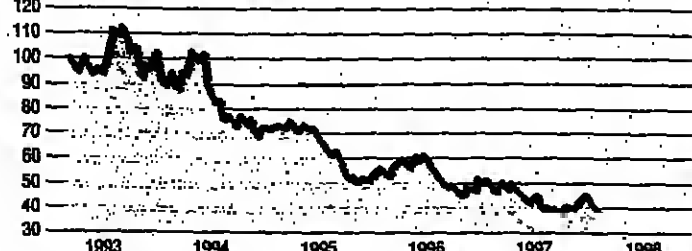
Willis Corroon: At a glance

Market value: £571m, share price 135p (+4p)

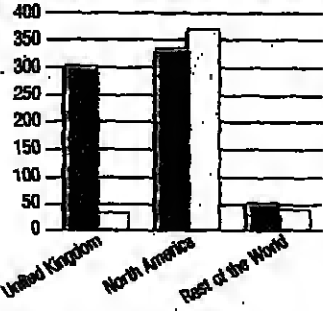
Five-year record	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Turnover (£m)	708	671	666	686	692
Pre-tax profits (£m)	75.2	5.6	50.2	91.8	95.5
Earnings per share (p)	11.3	0.0	7.0	7.0	13.8
Dividends per share (p)	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6

Insurance brokers,

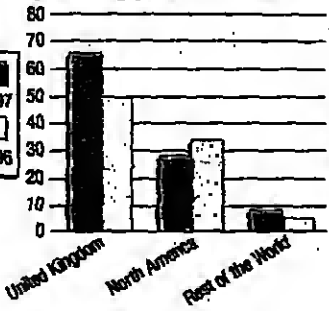
vs the FT Allshare, Rebased, Feb 1993=100



Operating revenue, by location



Operating profit, by location



broking market will remain tough. That said the shares are now sitting at a large discount to the stock market they are beginning to look attractive. If trading gets much worse it can only heighten takeover speculation.

Shell big enough to brave storm

For a company of Shell's size, one bad quarter barely rates as a blip. Still, yesterday's full-year results, which showed pre-tax profits falling by 36 per cent to £1.8bn in the fourth quarter, making a 14 per cent fall to £9.3bn in the full year, served as a useful reminder that the Anglo-Dutch oil giant is proving even harder to turn around than one of its supertankers. For all the restructuring that has been taking place in the past twelve months, nothing could shield Shell from the combined effects of the

falling oil price, the strong pound, and the crisis in Asia.

The gloom spread virtually across all of Shell's main businesses. Exploration and production earnings fell because of the lower oil price and warmer weather, while downstream profits were hit by restructuring charges. Chemicals suffered from the strength of sterling and lower margins in certain product areas.

The figure that worried investors most, however, was the drop in Shell's return on capital employed to from 13.3 per cent to 11.4 per cent in the final quarter. Shell aims to get returns up to 15 per cent by 2001 and 13 per cent by the end of this year. But if the oil price does not improve, an amount of frantic cost-cutting will allow it to achieve that.

In fact, the only spot of light was the company's decision to raise the dividends paid by Shell Transport & Trading, its UK parent, to reflect the loss of the associated tax credit. The re-

sult is that brokers are now forecasting that the dividend will grow by at least 12 per cent this year and next.

So what to do with the shares? In the grand scheme of things, yesterday's 10.25p fall to 411.5p is probably a bit of an overreaction. If you have to hold an oil stock, Shell is probably the most attractive: it's less exposed to the oil sector than its peers and has the benefit of more restructuring to come. But, as always, change is going to be slow.

Cable swap boosts shares

The slump in the European cable market has produced a shocking share price performance at BICC and Delta. So yesterday's deal to swap cable operations looks an eminently sensible move.

Delta appears to have got the best out of the deal in the short term. It gets a £5m cash payment and cements its position in the building and construction market. More importantly by chopping costs and focusing the business, it becomes more saleable. Jon Scott-Maxwell, Delta's chief executive, has made no secret of the fact that the group's future does not lie in cables as it cannot hope to compete with the largest players on a European stage. This deal can only bring forward the division's disposal. So it is easy to see why Delta's shares jumped 18p to 265p on the news.

The response at BICC, however, was more muted with the shares edging up just 0.5p to 140p. Nobody is quite sure whether the cables market has reached the bottom. If it has, then BICC could emerge as the real winner from this deal, but it is a big if. All the big cables groups have taken huge amounts of capacity out of the market, but only time will tell if their actions have been enough to restore profitability.

The extent of the industry's problems have taken even the company by surprise. Despite chief executive Alan Jones' best efforts, BICC's shares have underperformed the market by almost 60 per cent over the last year and have fallen from 465.5p in 1994.

Analysts forecast 1997 profits at BICC of around £110m, putting the shares on a prospective P/E ratio of 15. The cable swap should help 1998 profits to rise to around £135m. Despite the share price collapse BICC's shares still don't look cheap but it probably won't be holding on in the hope that the flimsy recovery is finally round the corner.

Celcis shares drop after profits warning

By Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

Shares in Celcis International, the hiotech company founded by the scientist Chris Evans and chaired by former England rugby coach Jack Rowell, lost 27 per cent of their value yesterday after the company issued a profits warning. The shares slumped 19p to a record low of 51.5p when the company said adverse currency factors and the financial turmoil in Asia meant current year profits were unlikely to meet analysts forecasts of £1m-£3m. The shares are now barely half the 100p issue price when the group came to the market in 1993.

The announcement was pounced upon by bear raider Simon Cawwell who been selling the shares "in the high 70s [pence]" the previous day. Mr Cawwell, who is known in the market as "Evil Kneivel", bought some shares back yesterday as the price fell sharply. However, he said the company still faced difficulties. "It looks to me as if they have lost their way."

Some analysts questioned

whether the profits alert would lead to management changes. But Arthur Holden, Celcis' chief executive, said no decisions had been taken. "The company will review the situation after the dust has settled and take the appropriate action." Founder Chris Evans is a non-executive director of the



Company founder:
Chris Evans

group. Separately the company said it had unified the distribution of its hygiene monitoring product line SystemsSURE, by granting its US distributor Becton Dickinson exclusive rights worldwide. This has delayed short-term products sales for markets outside the US. But the company said it believed the new arrangement would provide a more efficient long-term solution.

In its statement, Celcis added that it was "developing a number of important new product initiatives for exploiting its proprietary technology and remains confident about the prospects for continued growth."

Celcis makes hygiene monitoring kits which detect contamination in food.

In October, the company raised £3.7m through the placing of new shares at 95p. The cash was raised to help fund the £4.4m purchase of Scientific Associates, a contract testing centre in the US.

Celcis shares reached a peak of 141.5p in 1995.

Waterstone's founder returns as figurehead

By Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

The sale of the Waterstone's bookelling chain to EMI and Tim Waterstone is expected to be announced in two weeks with a price tag of around £300m. EMI's due diligence is now in its final stages and the deal with WH Smith should be completed next month.

It is thought that Mr Waterstone's Daisy & Tom children's stores will be included in the new company, though at a greatly reduced valuation.

The two Daisy & Tom stores are expected to be valued at just £2m-£3m. This is a fraction of the £30m price tag which WH Smith claimed Mr Waterstone was attaching to the chain when he made his audacious £1bn offer for the WH Smith group last

autumn.

Daisy & Tom will be grouped together with Waterstone's and EMI's Dillons book stores and its HMV music chain. Some Dillons stores will be converted to the Waterstone's format. No decision has been made on further conversions but it is expected that the Dillons name will survive in some form.

Tim Waterstone will be chairman of the new company but will not have a major operational role. The books business will be run by Alan Giles, Waterstone's chief executive, with HMV run by Stuart McAllister, its existing managing director.

Mr Waterstone will emerge from the deal with an equity stake in the new business as he is investing several millions. However, the main shareholders

will be EMI and Advent International, the US venture capital group that is backing Mr Waterstone.

The plan is to de-merge the business into a separately quoted company. EMI is thought to favour an early exit though it is not clear if Mr Waterstone will have a longer term role.

The Waterstone's deal would lead to talks starting once more between WH Smith and Virgin over the Virgin-Our Price music business.

Virgin, which owns 25 per cent of the company, is interested in acquiring Smith's 75 per cent stake. It is understood that Smith's chief executive, Richard Handover, did not want to start negotiations until the Waterstone's deal was completed. A value of around £135m is anticipated.

THE INDEPENDENT
INDEPENDENT

£10 Conran lunch

The Independent and Independent on Sunday in association with Terence Conran are delighted to offer readers the opportunity to enjoy lunch or early evening supper at six of London's top restaurants throughout February for £10

Until Saturday February 28th, the following establishments are offering readers a two course lunch or early evening supper for just £10 per person.

How to Book

To participate in the offer simply collect one token (tokens will be printed every day until Saturday February 28th) and then telephone the restaurant of your choice quoting yourself as an Independent diner. On your arrival at the restaurant you should present your token in order to qualify for the offer. Each token is valid for a complete table booking. The tokens will be valid for one week only, and will be dated accordingly. To continue to participate in the offer, simply collect a token from the week in which you wish to dine. Pre-booking is essential and all bookings are subject to availability.

A special discount is available on selected items in the Bluebird and Le Pont de la Tour shops on presentation of the token.



Blue Print Café

The Independent offer is available at the following restaurants:

Bluebird 350 King's Road, London, SW3 5UU
0171 559 1000
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 6pm - 7pm

Blue Print Café The Design Museum, 28 Shad Thames, London, SE1 2YE
0171 378 7031
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 6pm - 7pm*

Le Pont de la Tour Bar & Grill 36d Shad Thames, London, SE1 2YE
0171 403 8403
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 6pm - 7pm

Mezzo 100 Wardour Street, London, W1V 3LE
0171 314 4000
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 6pm - 7pm
closed Sunday lunchtime, open Sunday 12pm - 4pm

Quaglino's 16 Bury Street, St James's, London, SW1Y 6AL
0171 930 6767
Lunch 12noon - 3pm, early evening supper 5.30pm - 6.30pm

Zinc Bar & Grill 21 Heddon Street, London, W1R 7LF
0171 255 8899
The special 3 course menu is available between 12noon and 7pm
between Monday and Wednesday the offer is extended until 11pm*

The offer is available 7 days a week at all six restaurants

* Closed from 6pm on Sunday Offer not available after 6pm on February 14

FTSE to get 15-second update after 23 February

The FTSE 100 Index of leading shares will be calculated every 15 seconds from February 23. FTSE International, said yesterday. At present the index is calculated every minute.

FTSE International said it meant the index would reflect market movements faster and enable increased visibility for investors following the UK market.

Meanwhile, the options market LIFFE said it would introduce an electronic trading system for equity derivatives on individual stocks on 30 November. The new system, called LIFFE CONNECT, will allow investors to trade derivatives on electronic screens, using a system that matches buy and sell orders.

Government pension cut

More than 800,000 people will see the government's contribution to their pension slashed because of a decision by the DSS, a survey revealed yesterday.

The annual survey by the National Association of Pension Funds, which covers 611 schemes worth £370bn, revealed 11 per cent of members are in schemes which face a cut in rebates paid to pension schemes by the DSS. The decision, which takes effect in April next year, has the same effect as cutting the pay of those employees by 0.9 per cent.

Phone firm sales surge

Colt Telecom, the fast expanding group building business phones networks in European cities, yesterday revealed a 133 per cent surge in sales last year to £81.5m. Paul Chisholm, Colt's chief executive, said the company was on course to double the number of cities covered by the end of this year from six to twelve, including Zurich and Brussels. Colt's losses rose from £11.2m to £32.5m. Colt shares, which have doubled since a secondary issue last November, rose by 25p to £10.55.

'Don't tax parking' call

Retailers urged the Chancellor not to introduce a tax on car park spaces in next month's Budget. In its pre-Budget submission the British Retail Consortium said this would tax shoppers and raise inflation without reducing car use. It also urged that any new revenues from environmental taxes should be ring-fenced for spending on improved transport.

The BRC added that the minimum wage would increase the average weekly shopping bill by 3p or less than 0.1 per cent if it were set at £3.50. It urged the level should be based on total pay, including commissions and pension contributions, not just the hourly wage.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Amalgams Bros (I)	15.2m (15.52m)	1.07m (1.03m)	18.3p (17.1p)	3.3p (3.3p)
British Telecom (Q)	3.94m (3.79m)	1.02m (999.0m)	11.2p (8.4p)	nil
Cable (I)	45.03m (44.19m)	4.9m (2.7m)	7.89p (4.21p)	1.45p (1.30p)
Recovery Corp (I)	6.70m (1.05m)	-3.31m (-4.54m)	-5.08p (-7.49p)	nil
Shoreditch Solutions (I)	-	-5.42m (-1.50m)	-8.89p (-1.25p)	0.20p (0.50p)
Thames Valley University (I)	0.039m (0.124m)	-4.1m (0.850m)	-2.5p (1.3p)	8.5p (8.6p)
World Holdings (I)	37.93m (-)	4.35m (-2.98m)	7.0p (-5.7p)	1.9p (2.6p)
Westminster Health: C (I)	66.12m (50.05m)	6.28m (1.17m)	9.50p (4.5p)	2.85p (2.6p)
Willis Corroon (I)	-	95.5m (91.6m)	14.5p (13.8p)	6.6p (6.6p)
(I) - First (I) - Interim				

Oxford scientists in the money

Two Oxford scientists could make a paper profit of £500,000 when the science group they founded comes to the stock market.

Oxford GlycoSciences was founded 10 years ago by Raymond Dwek and Raj Parekh, in collaboration with Oxford University. The university also stands to make a healthy profit from the flotation.

The group specialises in producing technology used by drug companies to help identify pro-

teins that cause diseases. The group has recently signed a deal with Incyte to develop databases for the world's biggest pharmaceutical companies. The group is also carrying out clinical studies on two liver cancer treatments.

Oxford GlycoSciences is looking to raise £25m-£30m which will value the group at between £75m and £100m. It has already raised £30m from equity backers, such as Warburg Pincus and The Wellcome Trust.

Takeover of press group is blocked

The Government yesterday blocked the £52m takeover of Home Counties Newspaper Holdings, the regional newspaper publisher, by Johnston Press.

Nigel Griffiths, consumer affairs minister, said he decided not to give his consent without requiring a report from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC).

He said the 500p-per-share buyout announced in December would give rise to a "significant increase in concentration of the ownership of regional and local newspapers in the counties of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire."

"The proposed transfer would mean that Johnston would be likely to have over half of the market for such newspapers in those counties, and a considerably higher share in some localities. I have competition concerns relating to the consequences for newspaper advertising rates in these areas," he said.

Mr Griffiths said the parties had made it clear in their application that they were not prepared to undergo an MMC inquiry. "If they wish to make another application which is not dependent on my giving consent without an MMC inquiry, they are free to do so," he added.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

No. 006157 of 1997
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF
ELEMENTIS PLC
(formerly Harrisons & Crossfield plc)

and
IN THE MATTER OF
THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition was on 28th January 1998 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for (a) the sanctioning of a Scheme of Arrangement and (b) the confirmation of the reduction of the capital of the above-named Company from £200,000,000 to no less than £16,906,445.

AND NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Judge of the Companies Court at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2N 2DQ on Monday 23rd February 1998.

Any Creditor or Shareholder of the said Company desiring to oppose the making of an Order for the confirmation of the said reduction of capital should appear at the time of the hearing in person or by Counsel for that purpose.

A copy of the said petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undersigned Solicitors on payment of the regulated charges for the same.

Dated the 13th day of February 1998

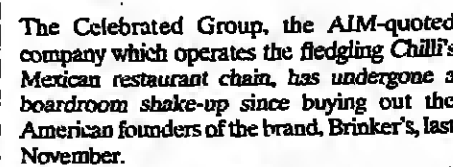
STEPHENSON HARWOOD
One, St Paul's Churchyard London
EC4A 3SH Ref: 700/232
Solicitors for the above-named Company

JOHN
WILLCOCK

In a separate development, a senior BA official expressed confidence that the alliance



operators offered services. Passengers soared by 17.1 per cent to 335,744, on the back of a 27 per cent increase in European scheduled traffic. BA is using Stansted as the headquarters for its new budget "turn-up-and-go" airline, called Go.



Basildon, Essex. It plans to roll out the restaurant chain in the South-east and the rest of the country. The Directors were given an added incentive to make the idea work yesterday by granting themselves a shipload of options. Mr Bush for instance, has been granted 1 million shares at 11p, and a further 1.2m at 13.5p.

In this survey 75 per cent of brides said they and their fiancées would be using their own savings, with 11 per cent and 10 per cent mentioning personal loans and credit cards respectively, as other possible payment methods. As a further sign of the times, 7 per cent

"With this three-line whip, I have to be there so they can see I have abstained," he quipped.

Chances are that at least once in a while it will have flickered through your mind, as the airplane engines rev, "What if the plane crashes? What if this is the one?"

The Barclaycard study also showed that 16 per cent of female respondents admitted to a fear of flying, against only 7 per cent of men. On the other hand, over a quarter of males admitted that a fear of flying had once stopped them

Pah, what nonsense. Hang on a minute, is the wing supposed to be vibrating like that ...

Details

Europe's captains of industry yesterday warned of serious economic divergence in the EU just months before the launch of European economic and monetary union.

In a damning report, the European employers federation UNICE blamed obstacles to hiring and firing, bloated public services, and the inflexibili-

ty of labour markets for dragging down Europe's global competitiveness. Britain, Ireland and The Netherlands are at the competitive edge because they - unlike Germany, France and most other EU economies - have restructured to meet the challenges of the global marketplace, the report claimed.

The UNICE report highlighted the sharp divergence across Europe which could undermine the single currency.

Industry in Germany and Belgium for example is burdened by the highest labour costs in the world – more than \$30 (£18) an hour – compared to around \$15 an hour in Britain or Ireland. Social security payments, payroll taxes, sick leave and other benefits account for 93 per cent of wage costs in manufacturing in France but only 40 per cent in Britain and Ireland.

and Portugal have an average ratio of taxes and social security contributions below the OECD average of 38 per cent of GDP. Total taxes and social security charges for an average worker amount to 57 per cent of total labour costs in the EU compared to 37 per cent in the US and 33 per cent in Japan. An average industrial worker in Belgium, where the marginal tax wedge is highest, has to work until the end of August each year just to pay

off taxes and social charges whereas a Japanese worker reaches a "tax free day" by April. UNICE also dismisses the "fallacy" that reduced working hours can trim unemployment by highlighting the German case: unemployment has reached its highest levels since before the war but German workers have the lowest annual working hours in Europe. British workers have the longest hours in the EU.

swallowing a fly along with the black stout. According to the firm, the man, who was drinking in a pub in Dublin, went on to drink the pint, but later that evening became "nauseous".

Alan Thomas, manager of Pycroft & Arnold's Bristol office, says: "The customer claimed that from then on he couldn't face a pint of Guinness. The only beer he could down was Budweiser - 30p a pint dearer in his local."

"He sued the licensee on the grounds that, as he drank on average eight pints a session, the fly episode was costing him an extra £2.40 a day - seven days a week. His claim, therefore, was for his annual additional bill of £806.40 - to be

Wells. Company Barclaycard revealed that almost one in ten of business travellers have a fear of flying. Some 12 per cent of this group admitted such fears have prevented them from travelling on business.

The Barclaycard study also showed that 16 per cent of female respondents admitted to a fear of flying, against only 7 per cent of men. On the other hand, over a quarter of males admitted that a fear of flying had once stopped them from travelling on business, against only 6 per cent of the females.

Pah, what nonsense. Hang on a minute, is the wing supposed to be vibrating like that ...

Country	Starting Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	1,900		
Australia	2,000	1,420	2,400
Austria	2,033	2,084	
Belgium	21,577	20,804	20,155
Canada	2,259	2,339	2,451
France	2,268	1,129	
ECU	15,008	14,672	14,485
Finland	8,978	8,981	
Germany	8,970	8,970	
Germany	2,967	2,936	2,938
Greece	48,655	47,42	47,3
Italy	2,262	2,262	
Japan	2,262	2,262	
Malaysia	6,225	6,246	6,222
Mexico	3,393		
Netherlands	3,393	3,326	3,306
New Zealand	2,895	2,902	2,798
Norway	12,352	12,296	12,222
Portugal	2,262	2,262	2,262
Saudi Arabia	6,443	6,193	6,222
Singapore	2,705	2,705	2,704
South Africa	6,066	6,066	6,222
Spain	2,262	2,262	2,262
Sweden	13,201	13,172	13,172
Switzerland	2,378	2,363	2,341

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	18384	10000
Brazil	18453	12683
China	13565	82795
Czech Rep	56422	34437
Egypt	55789	34047
Ghana	37601	22860
Hungary	34036	20774
India	63537	38790
Indonesia	19603	73000
Kuwait	05005	03065
Nigeria	13517	62500

[illegible]

Criller	Spot	1 month	3 month	Q-Risk
06/04	0612	0631	0333	
06/04	1434	1438	1438	
12/78	1276	1272	1265	
37/25	3725	3745	3725	
14/37	1437	1437	1437	
6/843	6384	6384	6381	
10/87	10828	10850	10820	
5/851	5851	5851	5851	
6/877	6877	6877	6877	
18/85	1885	1885	1885	
28/86	2885	2885	2885	
7/866	7866	7866	7866	
13/85	1385	1385	1385	
17/86	1786	1786	1786	
37/87	3807	3810	3809	
84/550	20345	20271	20275	
10/85	1085	1085	1085	
05/833	17128	17098	17092	
75/267	75263	74925	74956	
8/811	8811	8811	8811	
37/508	37523	37542	37542	
16/525	16536	16506	16512	
4/820	4820	4820	4820	
55/34	55324	55298	55298	
8/858	88583	88585	88585	
14/85	14464	14399	14399	
			14399	

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Oman	08308	13850
Pakistan	72080	44000
Philippines	85372	38900
Poland	58077	35448
Qatar	58546	36405
Russia	99009	60430
South Korea	28624	162600
Sri Lanka	53577	32701
Thailand	73155	44650
Turkey	365855	223300
UAE	60170	38725

[illegible]

UK		Germany	
Base	7.25%	Discount	2.50%
Europe		Lombard	4.50%
Intervention	3.30%	Cash	
Italy		Prime	6.50%
Discount	5.50%	Discount	5.00%
Netherlands		Discount	
Spencer	3.30%	Discount	3.50%

Bond Yields					
Country	3mth	chg	1yr	chg	2yr
Australia	9.90	0.01	4.85	0.02	5.95
Belgium	3.59	0.01	3.74	0.02	4.45
Canada	4.48	0.03	5.02	0.03	4.45
France	0.00	0.00	3.36	0.00	3.98
Germany	0.00	0.00	3.56	-0.01	3.33
Italy	6.00	0.03	3.25	-0.09	4.45
Japan	0.39	0.00	0.59	0.00	0.71
Netherlands	3.47	0.00	3.75	0.00	4.45
Spain	4.45	0.03	4.20	-0.08	4.45
Sweden	4.41	-0.02	4.71	0.00	4.45
Switzerland	1.95	0.00	1.64	0.00	2.45
UK	6.95	0.00	7.45	0.01	6.95
US	5.08	0.02	4.98	-0.02	4.45

	Overnight		1 week	
	Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer
Treasury Bills				
LIBOR				
Domestic Depos	725	750	738	750
Eurosterling Depo	744	756	747	753
Eligible Bank Bills				
Sterling CDs				
Eurodollar CDs				
ECU Deposits				

www.bloomberg.com/uk

[illegible]

	US	Japan	US
Prime	8.50%	Discount	0.50%
Discount	5.00%	Belgium	
Govt Funds	5.00%	Discount	2.75%
Spain		Central	3.30%
10-yr Repo	4.75%	Switzerland	
Sweden		Discount	3.00%
Repo(Avg)	4.35%	Lombard	

1 month		3 months		6 months		1 year	
Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer	Bid	Offer
0	6.95	7.0	6.95				
1	7.47	7.44	7.50	7.41	7.47	7.38	7.43
2	7.44	7.50	7.44	7.50	7.44	7.50	7.38
3	7.41	7.46	7.24	7.28	7.20	7.24	
4	7.37	7.44	7.31	7.40	7.32	7.33	7.25
5		5.92		5.35			
6	4.38	4.25	4.38	4.25	4.38		

Source: Bloomberg

	Sell	Buy	Yld
UK Index	104.00	104.00	2.37%
UK Traded Acc	144.20	144.20	1.36
UK Recovery	102.30	102.30	1.07
UK Corporate Acc	103.30	103.30	0.52%
UK Dividend/Acc	103.30	103.30	0.52%
UK Residual	902.37	902.37	5.20%

NEW!
ON SALE NOW

Investment
inve
decision
ever
make

£2.95
On sale at all
leading newsagents
or call
01795 414936
www.bloomburg.com/uk

	Sell	Buy	Yld
UK Index	104.00	104.00	0.84%
UK Traded Acc	144.20	144.20	1.24%
UK Corporate Acc	103.30	103.30	1.24%
UK Dividend/Acc	103.30	103.30	1.24%
UK Residual	902.37	902.37	1.24%

Contract		Settlement	
Long Oil	Mar-90	124.0	
German Bund	Mar-90	107.30	
US Long Bond	Mar-90	118.53	
Japan Govd	Mar-90	116.25	
Japan Govd Bd	Mar-90	129.10	
3 Mth Sterling	Mar-90	92.32	
3 Mth Eurodmt	Jun-90	95.31	
	Jun-90	96.49	
3 Mth Eurofin	Jun-90	96.30	
	Jun-90	94.09	
3 Mth Euroyen	Jun-90	92.04	
3 Mth Euroswiss	Jun-90	96.78	
	Jun-90	98.66	
3 Mth ECU	Mar-90	95.86	
	Mar-90	95.72	
FTSE 100	Mar-90	5549.00	50

Liffe FTSE 100 Index Op

Series	Feb	Call	Imp Vol	Put	Imp Vol
5500	92	19	43	21	
5550	17	54	21		
5600	38	17	91	21	
5650	21	17	125	21	

Energy

IRE	LEADS	LING	WING	WING	IRE	LEADS	LING	WING	WING
Mar	14.57	-0.04	7395	Feb	136.75	-2.50	7800		
Apr	14.92	-0.14	348.40	Mar	138.50	-2.50	1000		
May	15.22	-0.08	4903	Apr	141.25	-1.75	194		

Commodity Indices		
	Base date	Last
Index	1970 = 100	170.22
Agricultural	1970 = 100	228.12
Energy	1983 = 100	58.40
Ind Metals	1977 = 100	153.51
Livestock	1970 = 100	170.73
Prec Metals	1973 = 100	410.54

Fund	Self	Buy	YTD
BlackRock \$155M, Dealing: \$143.4 \$143.1			
Balanced	\$5.00	\$6.00	100
Balanced Acc	\$4.50	\$4.20	100
Balanced Growth	72.0	76.0	000
Conservative	103.0	103.0	000

the best investment in you!!

Bloomberg MONEY Investment News Service

Dead in Money
for your savings

IN THE MONEY

Fund	Self	Buy	YTD
Life Income	588.00	476.00	307
Earn Inc Age	177.00	186.00	302
FTS 100	172.00	84.00	115
FTS 100 Acc	114.00	119.00	000
Garn Growth	174.00	171.00	000
GrowthAcc	100.00	200.70	000

	Low	Mid	Open	High
3	C3.78	30.81	17.661	
4	18.19	81.32	21.898	
5	10.70			
6	18.19	39.93	12.421	
7	12.89	37.8		
8	10.52	10.52	19.68	
9	12.89	32.45	16.725	
10	9.44	32.57	19.604	
11	9.02	40.78	39.028	
12	9.44	22.44	13.672	
13	9.44		8.870	
14		12.35	61.720	
15	98.73	1.75	5.674	
16	98.66	9.48		
17	95.51	3.07	87.29	
18	55.480	10.93	8.236	

Low	Mid	Open	High
1.41E (Stonew)			
Aluminum HG			
Aluminum Alloy			
Copper H			
Lead			
Nickel			
Zinc			

Precious M	pm fix \$ per oz	Day
Platinum	352.50	
Palladium	242.00	
Silver	7.00 - 7.00	
Gold	258.45	

Agriculture			
Put	Apr	May	Put
165	228	173	250
149	207	193	250
127	177	214	228
108	154	241	205

Put	May	Put
149	207	250
127	177	214
108	154	241

* at 5:00 pm

	2007	2008	Spot on 10/1/08	2009
Mar	1817	-698	Goldman Sachs	6200
Apr	623	-47	Nasdaq	5400
May	158	-85	Cash	6800
Jun	634	-804	Fuel Oil (25%)	3100

	2007	2008	as 9/30/09	%chgdTTD
Mar	1817	-698	2092	
Apr	623	-47	-91	
May	158	-85	-302	
Jun	634	-804	-163	
Jul	77	-108	-143	

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

	2007	2008	2009
Mar	1817	-698	2092
Apr	623	-47	-91
May	158	-85	-302
Jun	634	-804	-163
Jul	77	-108	-143

[illegible]

	Cash	Cty	3 months	Cty	LINE stocks	Cty
73	5885	6550	650	71	58900	-10
74	5907	6500	628	64	63140	-16
75	58915	6150	176	176	11	36800
76	5975	6250	621	522	2	10725
77	5975	6250	575	575	66	66-36
78	5925	5900	5305	535	-20	1045
79	5955	6500	1079	1080	-6	48600

Metals

	pm fix/E per oz	Day's	Year's	Coins (\$)	Years		
0	3550	21425	315	2345	Knights	29535	-34
10	3535	Palladium	1475	0.00	Sow	700	
20	218	Silver	4.27	0.07	133	Notbs	30925
30	3825				Maple Leaf	3125	-33

Grains

Coffee		Barley		Potatoes		Lge Potatoes	
Ft	\$/tonne	LIFFE	\$/tonne	LIFFE	\$/tonne	As	\$/tzn
1	73000	Mar/96	7500	Mar/96	7000	Apr/96	5750
2	73000	May/96	7225	Apr/96	7500	May/96	5800
3	73000	Aug/96	7000	Apr/96	7500	Jun/96	5700
4	8322		76	Apr/96	7500	Jul/96	6340

[illegible][illegible]

1901. Deans: Basic Principles 220. New edition. Springfield, Ill.: C. C. Thomas, 1950. 220 pp. \$2.50. (C) 1950. C. C. Thomas.

Russell may pay price of failure

Cricket

Derek Pringle
reports from Port of Spain

PLAN B, or not Plan B? That is the question. But, with England hoping to play an unchanged side in today's third Test against the West Indies, minor surgery is required if England are to recover and get back in the series.

Today's Test will be Michael Atherton's 49th as England captain. It is also one of the most important of his career. Win it and the last minute U-turn he made to stay on last September will begin to seem the right decision. Lose it and the remaining three matches will seem like purgatory.

Monday's stinging defeat has not lain lightly on Atherton and, when he was eventually able to drag himself out of his room the next day, he cut a forlorn figure by the hotel pool. Sipping an orange squash he sat for a full 20 minutes shaking his head as he recalled the enormity of England's reverse.

Yet, if Atherton has proved anything over his career, it is that he is resilient beyond compare and, following a team meeting where "nobody hid behind anything" and everyone "got things into the open," he felt his side would rebound, despite playing the Test on the same ground.

"It was important to have a couple of days off," said Atherton before practice yesterday. "It was one of the most draining Test matches I've ever

played in. Not only was it unusually hot it was tense, too. Every session was on a knife edge. After the way we lost it was important to clear the mind and get away from the ground and the cricket.

"We've learned a harsh lesson, but it's better to learn it now while there are four Tests to go, than if it was the decider in a month's time. Test matches simply don't fall into your lap and I think we got to a stage where we just presumed we'd win. I don't believe we bottled it. We just didn't play with enough conviction."

One of the problems in losing a gruelling Test match is that the tired limbs and bruises, which tend to miraculously vanish after victory, suddenly begin to niggle away. Indeed, if the rain that has skirted Port of Spain over the last few days recedes and the hot weather returns, it will be interesting to see how much the 30-year-old bowlers in both sides cope, especially in the second innings.

In the last match Angus Fraser was not only England's trump card, he held all the aces as well. But if the other bowlers will probably not howl as poorly again, England should be held and play an extra front-line howler instead of Jack Russell. Depending on how the pitch scrubs up this morning, either Ashley Cowan or Robert Croft ought to play.

There is little doubt that Russell, England's wicketkeeper, has been harshly treated in the past. But although he has

been kept waiting for 18 months, Russell's 50th Test was not one to be immortalised on canvas.

For once, despite the risks inherent in lengthening the tail, the means justify the end. Psychologically, England need a boost. When you lose a Test after dominating all but two morning sessions, it is inevitable that you feel mentally hamstringed, and England know they are unlikely to put together a better sequence of play against this opposition again in the series. Bringing in new blood offers renewed hope and possibly a different tack.

In any case, the pitch, slightly damp at the moment - it was flooded after the previous match and with overcast weather about has not completely dried - has been better prepared than its predecessor, which was far grassier.

According to Bryan Davis, the pitch supervisor here, batting will be tricky at first, with the pitch playing at its best on the second and third days. Unless England win the toss and bowl the West Indies out cheaply, they will need all the bowling they can get.

However, Atherton and David Lloyd, conscious that the remainder of the squad have had perilously little cricket, are intending to play an unchanged side. Adam Hogg, underbowed since recovering from his shoulder injury, will have a late fitness test on a sore back. If he fails it, either Mark Butcher or Mark Ramprakash will bat at No 6.

By rights it should not be the only change and, whenever an imbalance has been created in the past, it is Russell's head that has tended to end up in the basket. And, rightly or wrongly, it has become a natural cut.

But if both teams look well balanced it is England who need to win, or at the very worst draw, this Test. Mathematical possibilities may exist, but to leave Trinidad 2-0 down is an equation even Einstein would probably not care to resolve.

If Atherton has ever harboured aspirations of becoming a gambler, now is the time to start.

WEST INDIES (probable): S L Campbell, S Williams, B V Langa (capt), G L Hopcraft, S Chandrapaul, J A Adams, D Williams, N C L A Amrose, K C G Benjamin, N A M McLean, C A Walsh.

ENGLAND (probable): M A Atherton (capt), A J Stewart, J P Crawley, M Hussain, G P Thorpe, A J Hogg, A Russell, R C Russell, R Croft, D W Howley, A R C Fraser, P C R Tufnell.



Newcastle's wonder kid, Jon Wilkinson

Photograph: Raoul Dixon/North News

Clubs prove a point in court

THE Rugby Football Union's provocative attempt to secure immunity from the Restrictive Trade Practices Act has been rejected by the High Court, much to the relief of England's professional clubs. The decision is likely to drastically weaken the governing body's authority over the Premiership, the joint RFU-EFDR administrative body.

Yesterday, Doug Ash, the new chief executive of both EFDR and the English Rugby Partnership, the joint RFU-EFDR administrative body, said: "We are not surprised at the outcome because the RFU had no grounds. We believe this situation should be very open and the Restrictive Practices Act is there to ensure that agreements can be scrutinised."

The Welsh Rugby Union has come out in support of the under-fire European Rugby Cup Ltd and its attempts to

ensure the future of both the European Cup and Conference competitions.

While the top 12 English clubs have announced their intention to boycott the European Cup next season, the WRU has given its backing to both events.

"The Welsh Rugby Union is fully supportive of European Rugby Cup Ltd in its organisation of European rugby competitions," the WRU chairman, Glynor Griffiths, said. "The Union will totally support both European Cup and Conference events and will endeavour to promote a structured season that will be seen to be to the benefit of all interested parties."

There is no doubt that Wilkinson's central role in the vanguard of the coming generation. He scored 38 points during the

England 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

Appleyard can count himself unfortunate that Colin brings the instincts of a half-winning open-side to the short-side position and we can use his explosive power in both attack and defence," the Welsh coach, Kevin Bowring, said.

For a coach under no little pressure, Bowring sounded remarkably upbeat about his chances of masterminding a first Welsh victory at Twickenham since Adrian Hadley's two-try haul stopped the sweet chariot in its tracks precisely a decade ago. "I have a good deal of respect for the way Clive Woodward is trying to play the game, but there is quite obviously a doubt in English minds at the moment," he said.

England's 18 Group's junior Grand Slam last season and shone for the Under-21s in their victory over France Youth in Mazamet a week ago. According to Dave Alfred, England's kicking coach, he is already one of the most prodigious booters of a rugby ball in the British game.

Woodward has not restricted his baby-snatching to Wilkinson and Long, either. George Chuter, the 21-year-old Saracens, is one of four hookers in a 27-man squad bolstered by the return from injury of Richard Cockerill. Only Dorian West, Cockerill's deputy at Welford Road, has been omitted from the squad taken to Paris for last week's unsuccessful Five Nations opener with the French.

The Welsh, meanwhile, opted to declare their hand early by naming a starting line-up yesterday and it showed only one change from the side that beat Italy last weekend. Colin Charvis replacing Rob Appleyard on the blind-side flank. Charvis was within touching distance of selection for last summer's Lions tour of when he suffered a serious groin condition.

All change at the Bridge: Vialli the new Chelsea player-manager as breakdown in pay talks ends Dutch master's two-year reign

Gullit sacked in bolt from the blue

A club in turmoil

By Adam Szuster

RUUD GULLIT'S tenure as player-manager of Chelsea came to an abrupt end after 18 months yesterday when he was replaced in the same role by the former Italian international striker Gianluca Vialli, one of the first players signed for Chelsea by Gullit.

The exact sequence of events that led to Gullit's departure remains unclear but Ken Bates, the Chelsea chairman, said at a hastily arranged press conference at Stamford Bridge yesterday: "We were unable to match his demands."

Gullit, appointed Chelsea manager in succession to Glenn Hoddle in the summer of 1996, had a contract which was due to expire in June of this year and has reportedly been locked in negotiations over a new contract with Chelsea's managing director, Colin Hutchinson, since October.

Yesterday, however, Gullit denied that he had been involved in talks prior to a meeting last Thursday.

"I was astounded to find out from the media that I have been replaced as Chelsea coach by Gianluca Vialli. I was only asked to attend one meeting in the last six months to discuss the future. This meeting took place on 5 February, when Colin Hutchinson and myself talked very amicably about a new two-year extension to my contract."

"At no time during my discussion was there any doubt in my mind that I would re-sign. In fact, I specifically told anyone who asked that I would sign a new deal after more talks - there were no more talks."

"I am committed to Chelsea, and in particular to the fans, whose dreams I have tried so hard to fulfil."

"It is incorrect for Colin Hutchinson to state that Chelsea Football Club tried to



Meet the new boss: (From left) Colin Hutchinson (managing director), Gianluca Vialli (new player-manager), Gary Staker (translator) and Ken Bates (chairman) ring the changes yesterday. Photograph: Peter Jay

negotiate with me for three months - there were no negotiations."

For his part, Hutchinson said in a statement yesterday: "Uncertainty about Ruud Gullit's future at Chelsea has dragged on for several months. We have been attempting to get Ruud to commit to an extension to his contract beyond his present deal, which expires on 30 June 1998, since last October. The delay has become potentially damaging. Back-room staff with mortgages to pay couldn't be sure they would be in a job after the season ends. Because of Ruud's non-commitment we took the unusual step of guaranteeing first-team manage-

ment staff a further one year employment should Ruud leave and his successor not require their services. For the good of the club and planning for next season, the situation has had to be resolved."

"Ruud and I met last Thursday. During a 40-minute meeting it was established Ruud was prepared to extend by two years. For our part, we indicated that we wished the new contract could be as a manager only. We believed this would allow Ruud more time to concentrate on the team and enable him to get involved in new areas like going out to watch potential players, assess up-coming opposition and spend more time working

on technique and skills with individual players after the normal training sessions."

"We have appreciated that Ruud has found it increasingly difficult combining playing and managing, despite us easing his workload. Unfortunately while we were prepared to give Ruud a contract which we believe would have made him the best-paid manager in the Premiership, we were not able to meet what he wanted and expected. We simply could not afford what he was asking. Naturally this was disappointing. Ruud was told at the end of the meeting that unfortunately the gap was too wide to allow further meaningful ne-

gotiations and that we would need to actively pursue lining up a replacement."

Vialli was apparently approached on Monday and was offered the job on Wednesday evening. According to Hutchinson, Gullit did not hang around to hear the bad news. "I had a meeting with Ruud at lunchtime today," Hutchinson said at yesterday's press conference. "But unfortunately it did not get as far as telling him that he was being replaced because he decided to call an abrupt end to the meeting."

Bates said: "I'm sorry that it's come to this but we had this problem two years ago when we had another manager [Glenn

Hoddle] who wouldn't make his mind up until April and as we were already planning for next season it was important to ensure a smooth continuity."

"There may be supporters who are sad that he is leaving and there may be others who take a contrary view but I am delighted to pay tribute to him. He took us on to a new plane as far as football was concerned. He helped make Chelsea one of the most talked about clubs in the world and he won us the FA Cup in his first season and will always be remembered for that. I'm sad he's leaving but one has to face up to facts."

While speculation will abound regarding Gullit's future

- whether it lies in his native Netherlands or with his former club in Italy, Milan, or elsewhere - Vialli was looking forward to his new challenge. "I'm absolutely delighted and I have to say that I was amazed when Colin asked me if I was available for the job," he said. "This is the most unbelievable thing that's happened in my career. I have a lot of great memories but this is something different even from the feeling of scoring a goal."

"I'm still a little confused but I'm very happy and I hope I can be the right person for the right job."

"When Colin asked me if I was available, I called some good friends for advice and

they told me that I was suitable. But I'm just a beginner and I know it's going to be different from being a player. The supporters have been unbelievable with me over the past two seasons and I would just ask them to keep supporting the club and the team."

"I know that for the players it will be a bit difficult to go through this unusual situation but I hope they can go through it with maturity, which is the most important thing. I was one of the lads and I still am, but some things will have to change and what I want to do is improve the relationship between the manager and the players which is the key to any successful team."

Vialli, the Michelangelo of Stamford Bridge

The new manager

By Guy Hodgson

WHEN Vujadin Boskov, the Yugoslav coach of Sampdoria, was asked to describe Gianluca Vialli, he did not hold back. "He defends like a tiger," he said, "attacks like a lion and is sharper than a puma." It remains to be seen whether he has the managerial wisdom of an owl.

There were several paradoxes about the announcement that the 33-year-old Italian

striker will become Chelsea's player-manager, not least of which is that he is still at Stamford Bridge. For much of his time under Ruud Gullit, Vialli appeared to be on his way out.

Only last May, as Vialli was about to be given a desultory two-minute appearance in Chelsea's FA Cup final win over Middlesbrough, Gullit appeared to have decided that his first signing as Chelsea manager would stay only for a season. "I don't want any player to leave, every player here is welcome to stay," he said. "But if

the player himself has said he wants to leave, then it is difficult." There was no doubt who he had in mind.

Vialli joined Chelsea in 1996, a few weeks after helping Juventus win the European Cup. It was the climax of a career that had begun with his local club, Cremonese, was nurtured under Boskov at Sampdoria and reached full flower at the Stadio delle Alpi.

A strong player who was described as clumsy as a youngster, but who achieved a delicacy of touch in his late 20s,

he signed for Juventus in 1992 for a then world record of £12m. Three years later he was world player of the year. "He is," Gianni Agnelli, the Juventus owner, said, "the Michelangelo of the Sistine Chapel. A sculptor who can transform himself into a painter."

The 1996 European Cup final was a bitter-sweet moment for Vialli, who lifted the trophy knowing it would be his last game for the club. Juventus had offered him only a year's contract with no improvement in wages. "There

are ways of making a player unwanted," he said.

His free-transfer status tempted Arsenal and Rangers, but he plumped for Chelsea, or rather fashionable London, signing a three-year deal worth £4.2m. Soon he was ensconced in a Knightsbridge flat, his distinctive shaven head frequently seen at the Italian restaurant, San Lorenzo's.

"London was always my dream," he said. "It was a matter of image. Moving from one club to another is never easy. It had to be a radical change."

Vialli began only 25 games for Chelsea in 1996-97, while this season, despite Gullit frequently singling him out for praise, he has started only eight. Yet he has scored seven goals. In charge now, Vialli can select himself as often as he likes.

He is hugely popular with his supporters and he embarks on his new career at a fortuitous moment. Not many begin management with their team one match away from Wembley and second in the Premiership.

The puma, the lion and the tiger have landed on their feet.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3533, Friday 13 February By Phil

Thursday's solution

1 Across

1 Scottish official job involving a good deal of travel (7)
2 Struggle to produce combination of grain and fruit (7)
3 Unusual treatment applies when ailing, having caught cold in the first place (7,8)
4 Goddess or some other at Olympus (5)
5 Church worker caught twisted gentleman in the grip of the Devil (9)
6 Teams with polish will get a glance (9)
7 What may be used to restrain members in strikes? (5)
8 Crackers decorated with coils? (5)
9 Item of women's underwear affected Arlecchino (9)

10 Down

10 Merrily reversing sensation encountered in depression (9)
11 Girl embraced by Madeleine (5)
12 Uncommon description of a beaumont laid flat? (4,2,3,6)
13 Ciphers possibly having a round shape (7)
14 Haunt of thieves around City clearly lacking in heart and goodness (7)

15 Down

15 Own bodyguard is chasing vigilante group (7)
16 Finished rebuilding the road in West Devon (4,3,4,4)
17 Love in my soul dissipated in a worrying way (9)
18 More than one story follows on the radio? (5)

19 Across

19 Bird, or, on part of coat of arms (9)
20 Violin used in dramatics (5)
21 When there's zero profit in having committed oneself? (5,2,2,6)
22 Motors with English and Spanish girl (7)
23 Ill-considered and almost rude, I see (9)
24 Dashing round unseated rival, like a medieval knight? (9)
25 Crowds supporting the French religious representatives (7)
26 Stayed up (not half) dancing for Mardi Gras? (7)
27 Astonish the little woman with gold (5)
28 Cockney, finally: "I 'ad 'old of the crop" (5)

Published by Newspaper Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 4DL, and printed at Murrat Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford

Back issues available from Historic Newspapers, 01958 840370

Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office

Cold, aloof and ruthless, yet his appeal was magnetic

The departing hero

By Clive White

WE KNEW it would have to end one day, so there can be no regrets about Ruud Gullit's leaving. Two and a half years was more than most of us expected him to stay when Glenn Hoddle pulled off one of the transfer coups of the decade. There is not a football fan in the country, no matter his persuasion, who cannot say that he did not feel just a little bit more proud about the English game for Gullit's involvement in it.

Probably no other footballer in the world could have done more, by his mere presence, to lift the profile of the English game abroad. He has been a godsend to the Premiership and doubtless their paymasters, Sky Television, too.

It is a mark of Gullit's standing in the game that he should have become the first black manager in the Premiership without anyone ever commenting on the fact. Furthermore, that it should have been at a club where 10 years earlier another black player, Paul Canoville, was bounded out because of racial abuse.

Gullit has never been the sort to be fazed by such problems. His self-confidence, which at times borders on arrogance, was apparently invested in him by his father, a self-made man who emigrated to the Netherlands from Surinam.

And yet despite his apparent popularity with the public at

large, Gullit has had his detractors here and for reasons that had nothing to do with racial prejudice. Perhaps because the game comes so easy to him, he is not as passionate as some would like. "Look, there are a lot of other things in life," he once said. "When I am at home I don't even think or talk about football. It's not my whole life. I like it, I like playing it. I do not like talking about it."

If he is not commenting on a match for television, Gullit



rarely goes to games. He left Chelsea's scouting to other people. In fact, he had to be persuaded to go and watch even his own teams play, other than the first XI of course. And yet, in other respects, he was the ultimate professional. When Chelsea won 6-1 at Tottenham recently, one might have expected someone as laid-back as Gullit to be putting his feet up in the dug-out. Not a bit of it. Even at 4-1 he was up on his feet cajoling his players, urging them on to greater heights.

Yet players want to play for him like few other managers. His appeal is magnetic. While Hoddle succeeded in luring Gullit to

England in the twilight of his career, it is doubtful whether even he would have had sufficient cachet to attract some of Serie A's leading players like Gianfranco Zola and Gianluca Vialli.

Gullit can be ruthless in his determination to succeed. Probably no other manager in England could have got away with leaving out Vialli as often as he has, as well as other players of similar standing such as Zola and Mark Hughes.

There have been stories that he is uncaring, cold to the point of indifference and aloof with his players. But then so was Brian Clough and countless other great managers. "As far as he is concerned," his assistant, Graham Rix, said recently, "he is treating them no differently from the way he was treated when he was a player in Milan at the top of his career and found himself left on the bench."

Gullit has enjoyed his English experience. In Italy he found it difficult to escape attention, even in a city as large as Milan. Privacy is respected even less there than it is here and there has been minimal intrusion into his private life, including his relationship with Johan Cruyff's daughter. "It's because I lived my life so seriously over there," he has said, "that I now feel so free over here, playing and managing Chelsea, living in London, going to gigs and the cinema and just having fun."

All good things, though, must come to an end.

The king is dead, long live the king

Ruud Gullit

1962: Born Surinam
1976: Signed for Haverham
1977: Made international debut
1982: Joined Feyenoord
1983: Signed for PSV Eindhoven
1987: Signed by Milan for £5.5m. European and World Footballer of the Year
1988: Helped Milan to Italian title. Captained Netherlands to European Championship
1989: Won European Cup with Milan
1990: Won second European Cup again
1992: Won second Italian title with Milan
1993: Won third Italian title with Milan before joining Sampdoria
1994: Retired from international football. Moved back to Milan for seven months before returning to Sampdoria
1995: Signed two-year contract with Chelsea
1996: Appointed player-coach in succession to Glenn Hoddle
1997: Guided Chelsea to sixth place in the Premiership and won the FA Cup
1998: Sacked as Chelsea manager

Gianluca Vialli

1964: Born Cremona
1980-84: Signed for Cremonese
1986: Signed for Sampdoria for £2.0m
1987: Won Italian international debut
1988: Loan to Barcelona in European Cup-Winners Cup
1989: Signed for Sampdoria
1990: Signed for Sampdoria
1991: Won Italian title with Sampdoria
1992: Won European Cup final to Barcelona at Wembley
1993: Moved to Juventus for world-record £10m fee
1995: Won UEFA Cup with Juventus
1996: Won the Italian League and Cup double. Named World Player of the Year
1997: Signed for Juventus
1998: Signed for Juventus
1999: Signed for Juventus
2000: Signed for Juventus
2001: Signed for Juventus
2002: Signed for Juventus
2003: Signed for Juventus
2004: Signed for Juventus
2005: Signed for Juventus
2006: Signed for Juventus
2007: Signed for Juventus
2008: Signed for Juventus
2009: Signed for Juventus
2010: Signed for Juventus
2011: Signed for Juventus
2012: Signed for Juventus
2013: Signed for Juventus
2014: Signed for Juventus
2015: Signed for Juventus
2016: Signed for Juventus
2017: Signed for Juventus
2018: Signed for Juventus
2019: Signed for Juventus
2020: Signed for Juventus
2021: Signed for Juventus
2022: Signed for Juventus
2023: Signed for Juventus
2024: Signed for Juventus
2025: Signed for Juventus
2026: Signed for Juventus
2027: Signed for Juventus
2028: Signed for Juventus
2029: Signed for Juventus
2030: Signed for Juventus

Laser correction for Short-sight & Astigmatism

Our specialist doctors can permanently treat short-sight and astigmatism using the most advanced lasers with a technique which is now ten years old. After a thorough eye examination and consultation you receive between 15 to 90 seconds laser treatment and go home shortly afterwards. Having performed over 37,000 treatments since 1992, OPTIMAX has established itself as the largest provider of laser treatment in the UK.

"To wake up in the morning and see perfectly is bliss."

Patient: Pat Sargent, Surgeon, London

OPTIMAX LASER EYE CLINICS

£495 per eye consultation only £50

MONTHLY PAYMENT: £41.67 per month for 12 months 10% APR

Phone now for your free information pack

0990-14 33 14

LONDON-BRISTOL-MANCHESTER-BIRMINGHAM NEWCASTLE-GLASGOW